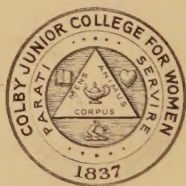




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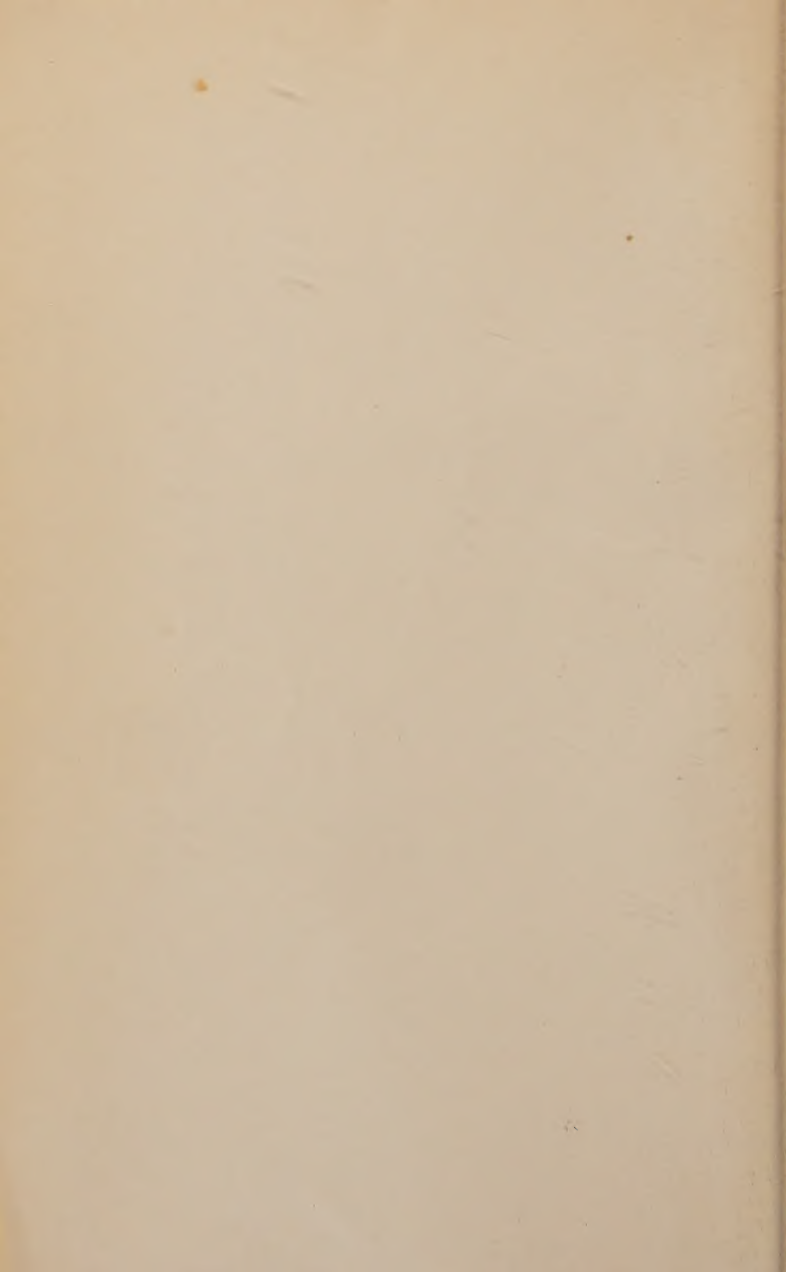












THE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI



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THE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
CHRISTINA GEORGINA  
ROSSETTI

WITH MEMOIR AND NOTES &c  
BY  
WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI

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## PREFACE

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S first published poetic volume, which had been preceded by some poems issued in a more scattered shape, was produced in 1862; she died in 1894. It seems now to be time that her Poetical Works should be brought out in a duly co-ordinated form, practically (though not in the most absolute possible sense) complete.

Her poetic volumes appeared as follows:—

1. *Verses*, privately printed, 1847. This volume has been reissued to the public at a recent date, but without any authority obtained, nor I suppose legally needed, from the representatives of the writer.
2. *Goblin Market and other Poems*, 1862 (Macmillan).
3. *The Prince's Progress and other Poems*, 1866 (Macmillan).
4. *Sing-Song*, 1872 (Routledge, now Macmillan).
5. *A Pageant and other Poems*, 1881 (Macmillan). The volumes 2, 3, and 5, have been reissued in a collected form, introducing a moderate number of additional poems.
6. *Verses*, 1893 (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). These poems are reprinted in the volume here named from three earlier volumes of combined prose and verse.
7. *New Poems*, 1896 (Macmillan). Collected and edited by myself after Christina's death.

From this list it will be seen that the Firm of Macmillan & Co., Limited, has now and heretofore been in a position to deal with all Christina Rossetti's poems, except only the *Verses*, 1893, No. 6 on the list. Those *Verses* include many of the finest devotional poems that she ever wrote; and to bring out, without including these, an edition of her poems professedly or proximately complete, would have been a fallacious attempt. By an arrangement made with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, we are enabled to include the *Verses* in the present edition.

The division of my sister's writings in this edition runs thus: The Longer Poems, Juvenilia, Devotional Poems, General Poems, Poems for Children and Minor Verse, and Italian Poems. Each of these sections is arranged in order of date, so far as the conditions (as to which some details are given in my Notes) reasonably allow. I think that readers already interested in Christina Rossetti's poetry will find some pleasure in tracing the sequence of dates. They will learn that some of her best poems were written at a very early period of her youth. Her own arrangement of her poems in the latest collected edition (which, as already indicated, includes only the volumes that I have numbered 2, 3, and 5, and not the other four volumes) may also be regarded as a point of some interest; I give that Table of Contents in an Appendix (A). That her arrangement in all instances was not merely haphazard may be taken for granted—she consulted her brother Dante (Gabriel a good deal, with regard at any rate to No. 3; at the same time, I do not perceive that any very definite plan has been followed in the latest collected edition. One clear distinction is made—that of separating the poems which first appeared in vol. 5 from those which are proper to vols. 2 and 3; the contents of 2 and 3 are fused together without any regard to dates of composition or of first publication, and perhaps even with some inclination to keep this point in a haze.

As to the few Italian poems, I have had before now occasion to remark that they appear to me to be in essentials as good as those in English, although I could readily suppose that in some points of diction, etc. they are not up to the standard of verse written by a native Italian. Later on I was somewhat surprised to find, in an Italian literary paper, named *Il Marzocco*, a criticism expressed in the following very adverse terms: 'She wrote also some Italian verses; but, if I am to judge of them from the specimens I know, they not only do not add anything to her fame as a poet, but rather detract from it, so formless and inept do they seem to me. It might almost be thought that the writer of those verses did not, as we know she did, speak from early childhood her paternal language.' This criticism is signed 'Th. Neal,' an English-seeming name which is used (as I have been informed) by an Italian writer. I quote the observation for whatever it may be worth, and for candour's sake, but can hardly help thinking that it must be harsher than the circumstances warrant. Recently I have had occasion to converse with a literary Italian, well versed in English: he considers that Christina's Italian



verses are not undeserving of commendation, and assimilate to native work more nearly than those of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

With regard to the volume above-mentioned entitled *New Poems*, which I edited in 1896 after my sister's death, it has been alleged by some critics that I raked together all that I could find, however indifferent in several instances, and presented all to the public, who would gladly have dispensed with many. As a statement of fact, I know this to be incorrect; and, as a matter of opinion, I consider it mistaken. So far from raking together all that I could find, I left unused a considerable number of compositions that were at my disposal; and in the present edition I still leave these unused. I add in an Appendix (B) a list of them; this is perhaps not of much concern to any one, but it serves to confirm my assertion, and may be regarded with favour by some future editor, who might really be minded to carry to its utmost limit the 'raking-together' process. And I will not pretend to deny that, in the case of a writer who has attained a certain standard (it must be a high one) of fame and popularity, I consider that that process has a good deal to say for itself.

The contents of the volume named *New Poems* are of course reproduced, in their due order of date, etc., in the present edition. In prefacing that volume I made the remark: 'I conceive *some* of the compositions herein contained to be up to the level of Christina Rossetti's best work,<sup>1</sup> and the great majority of them to be well up to her average.' This is an opinion which I still entertain, although aware that several critics of the *New Poems* formed and expressed a very different judgment. They seemed to find little to commend in the volume, and much to object to, both in the poems themselves and in my action as their editor. Those critics and I must apparently agree to differ as to the general ratio of

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that some readers might like to know which are the compositions here referred to. I will therefore give a list of them (which follows the order of their pagination in the *New Poems*, not in the present edition). They are twenty-six in number, viz., *The Summer is Ended*, *A Pause*, *Restive* (which is now reprinted as Section 3 of *Three Stages*), *Long Looked for*, *Let Patience have her Perfect Work*, *In an Artist's Studio*, *Meeting* (if we shall live, we live), *Under Willows*, *A Sketch*, *If I had Words*, *Now They Desire*, *Not Yours but You*, *By the Waters of Babylon*, *Birds of Paradise*, *Il Rossegiar dell'Oriente*; and (more especially) *A Soul*, *Cobwebs*, *A Chilly Night*, *Acme*, *Introspective*, *To-day and To-morrow*, *En Route*, *By Way of Remembrance*, *Sleeping at Last*, *There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God* (Come, blessed sleep, most full, most perfect, come), and *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness* (When all the over-work of life).

merit in the *New Poems*, and as to the question whether an editor is justified in publishing, after the death of the writer, compositions which had remained unpublished during the lifetime of the latter. I myself apprehend that (both in the case of my sister and of other writers) there may have been a variety of reasons why poems did not get published in their lifetime, which reasons do not continue to operate posthumously to any valid extent; and that the person who comes into possession of the poems of the deceased has a full right—amounting in some instances almost to a duty—to publish what he considers to be good enough for the purpose, and to be unexceptionable on other grounds.

In the volume *New Poems* there were some slight or out-of-the-way items—such as *Bouts-rimés Sonnets*, *An Alphabet for Children*, etc.—which, according to the plan of that book, were mixed up with poems of a more serious and artistic kind. In the present volume I have coupled those items, under the name of ‘Minor Verse,’ with the Poems for Children, and have thus, I hope, removed any substantial objection to their inclusion.

I may glance here at a point of typography in the present volume—a point which, although small, is not wholly trivial. The system followed as to the indenting of lines, so as to mark metre and rhyming, is far from uniform. In some instances no indenting whatever appears; in others it is consistently, in others again only partially, carried out. The discrepancy affects chiefly, on the one hand, those poems which were published by Christina herself, and, on the other hand, those which I put together in the *New Poems*—my preference being for a fully applied process of indenting. This process is more difficult of application to Christina’s compositions than to most others, owing to the exceptional degree of latitude which she allowed herself in varying (and I think very generally with fine rhythmical effect) the number of feet in one and the same piece. Thus the marking of the length of lines by indenting would frequently be a very similar marking of the rhymes. When I had to deal with the *New Poems* in the present volume I found that to attempt to make the scheme of indenting uniform throughout would involve an amount of trouble to the Printers as well as myself which seemed out of proportion to any contingent advantage: therefore, though somewhat reluctantly, I have left the indenting (or non-indenting) to reappear in much the same form as in the original volumes from which the present one is compiled.

The poems of Christina Rossetti are marked by certain key-notes of feeling which, although they could not be allowed to govern the arrange-

ment of the compositions in this edition, deserve to be borne in mind by her readers ; and among the readers there may be some who would like to be furnished with a clue for following out, as the inclination prompts them at the moment, one or other of these trains of sentiment. It may perhaps be said that the two ideas most prevalent of all are the strenuous and onerous effort to attain to the salvation of the soul in heaven, and the ardent absorbing devotion to the work and the very person of the Saviour Jesus Christ. These ideas are diffused over the whole area of the authoress's Devotional Poems, and are to be traced in other compositions as well. It would, I think, be superfluous to call attention to particular poems embodying those paramount ideas, and I therefore limit myself to other ideas, subordinate, yet still marked and dominant,—some of them of much importance in themselves, others not thus important but highly characteristic of Christina Rossetti. I will define them thus : (1) Personal Experiences and Emotions ; (2) Death ; (3) The Aspiration for Rest (and her ideal of bliss appears to have consisted in ultimate rest, only less absolutely than in the promised fruition of heaven) ; (4) Vanity of Vanities ; (5) A Love of Animals, and more especially such animals as are frequently regarded as odd or uncouth, rather than obviously attractive ; (6) Winter—almost invariably contemplated as dismal and repugnant ; (7) The loveliness of the Rose. In the Appendix (C) I give a reference to the principal instances (not by any means to all instances) in which these themes are prominently brought forward.

In my Notes at the end of the volume many details will be found bearing upon the occasions which gave rise to particular poems, the significance of the poems, etc. For such compositions as appeared in the volume of *New Poems* the Notes appended to that volume are here re-used, with modifications and omissions.

Brief though the foregoing remarks are, they may perhaps serve as being all that I need personally say about the Poems of my Sister. To puff them is neither my business nor my inclination. To analyse them in any painstaking manner is outside my editorial scope—many of them in fact have already sunk deep into the feelings and the memory, and I might say the conscience, of poetic readers. I think it well, however, to add to my Preface a condensed Memoir of Christina Rossetti. Up to the date of her death little was publicly known about her, as she had led an extremely quiet and even a secluded life. Since then the Biography by my friend, Mr. Mackenzie Bell, has appeared—January 1898. When that work came

out some very erroneous opinions were expressed about it in the press—not of course in all the critiques, but in two or three of the most influential. The view thus propounded, and propounded in a very confident tone, was that I had been a main performer in Mr. Bell's book: the voice might be the voice of Jacob, but the hands were the hands of Esau. The critics must permit me to tell them that this was totally untrue. Their semi-omniscience was at fault. The simple facts of the case are as follows:—Mr. Bell, soon after Christina's death, formed the project of writing a biographical and critical study of her. As he had known nothing personally of Christina except during some thirteen months preceding her death, he was necessarily aware that his biographical materials must be obtained from some one else; and he very correctly opined that I knew much more about her than any other person living, and that therefore it would be expedient to apply to me for a large majority of his information. He asked whether I would furnish such information, and I said yes; and in the course of his work he addressed to me a great number of questions, mostly in writing, to which I replied, also mostly in writing. At one stage of the matter I put it very plainly to Mr. Bell that, while I was happy to return a direct and full reply to most of his inquiries, I neither expected nor intended to regulate in any way the use he might make of my answers; and on this plan I acted throughout, except that in some very few instances I found, when he sent me the proofs of his book, that he had reproduced in my own off-hand terms some details (generally affecting outsiders) which I thought not fitted to be published in the same terms. These few instances I pointed out to Mr. Bell, and he, with the right feeling which invariably marked his treatment of such matters, at once conformed to my views. I observed in the proofs a great number of other instances in which he had quoted my precise phrases. In several of these cases my opinion was that it would have been better, on literary or other grounds, if he had simply worked up into his own narrative the facts which I placed at his disposal (without quoting my precise words, or even naming me as the informant), or if he had merely utilized my details so far as tacitly to avoid making any mis-statement: but, faithful to my view that the book ought to be his in the fullest sense, and in no sense mine, I advisedly abstained from raising any objection or demur on this point. The critics to whom I have referred, while treating Mr. Bell and his book with some favour in the comparative if not the positive degree, fell foul of me in something not unlike the superlative degree—and this mainly on the ground,



erroneously imagined by themselves, that most of the things which they disliked in the book had been foisted into it by me in a spirit of dictation at once arrogant and obtuse, and had by Mr. Bell been too tamely permitted to appear. Both Mr. Bell and I had reason to complain of these critics: Mr. Bell for being falsely credited with a degree of sheepish acquiescence which had tended to spoil his book, and I for being falsely arraigned of an offence not enacted by me but invented by my censors, who thereupon abused me for doing what I had not done, and for defects of mind and character evidenced by the imputed doing of it.

But all this is an old story, and barely worth referring to now. I glance at it chiefly because it has constituted one of my reasons for preferring on the present occasion to write something—a very little—about my sister in the way of biography. Mr. Bell's treatment of the subject is in many respects meritorious, but need not prevent a relative from stating a few facts in his own way. A reader of the poems ought to know who and what their authoress was. I propose to put him in possession of that amount of knowledge, and of little beyond that.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

<sup>1</sup> LONDON, *September 1903.*



# CONTENTS

	<i>Page.</i>
PREFACE . . . . .	v
APPENDIX A.—Contents of the Collected Edition issued by Christina Rossetti .	xxxix
APPENDIX B.—Poems by Christina Rossetti extant in MS., etc. .	xli
APPENDIX C.—Some leading Themes, or Key-notes of Feeling, in the Poems of Christina Rossetti . . . . .	xliii
MEMOIR . . . . .	xlv

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	
1.	Dedicatory Sonnet . . . . .	C. 1880	lxxiii

## THE LONGER POEMS

2.	Goblin Market . . . . .	1859	1
3.	Repining . . . . .	1847	9
4.	Three Nuns . . . . .	1849-50	12
5.	The Lowest Room (Like flowers sequestered from the sun)	1856	16
6.	From House to Home . . . . .	1858	20
7.	The Prince's Progress . . . . .	1861-65	26
8.	A Royal Princess . . . . .	1861	35
9.	Maiden-Song . . . . .	1863	38
10.	'The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children'	1865	41
11.	The Months : A Pageant . . . . .	1879	48
12.	A Ballad of Boding . . . . .	B. 1882	55
13.	Monna Innominata : A Sonnet of Sonnets . . . . .	B. „	58
14.	An Old-World Thicket . . . . .	B. „	64
15.	All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord : A Processional of Creation	B. „	68
16.	Later Life : A Double Sonnet of Sonnets . . . . .	B. „	73

## JUVENILIA

17.	To my Mother on the Anniversary of her Birth . . . . .	1842	82
18.	The Chinaman . . . . .	„	82
19.	Hymn . . . . .	1843	83
20.	Love and Hope . . . . .	„	83

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
<i>JUVENILIA, continued—</i>			
21.	On Albina . . . . .	1844	83
22.	Forget Me Not . . . . .	"	83
23.	Charity . . . . .	"	84
24.	Earth and Heaven . . . . .	"	84
25.	Love Ephemeral . . . . .	1845	84
26.	Burial Anthem . . . . .	"	84
27.	Lines to my Grandfather . . . . .	"	85
28.	Summer (Hark to the song of greeting ! The tall trees) . . . . .	"	86
29.	Serenade . . . . .	"	87
30.	The End of Time . . . . .	"	87
31.	Couplet (Come cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer) . . . . .	C. "	88
32.	Amore e Doverè . . . . .	1845-47	88
33.	Mother and Child . . . . .	1846	88
34.	Mary Magdalene . . . . .	"	89
35.	On the Death of a Cat, a Friend of mine . . . . .	"	89
36.	To Elizabeth Read, with some Postage-Stamps for a Collection . . . . .	"	90
37.	Love Attacked . . . . .	"	90
38.	Love Defended . . . . .	"	90
39.	The Martyr (See, the sun hath risen) . . . . .	"	91
40.	The Dying Man to his Betrothed . . . . .	"	92
41.	Lisetta all' Amante . . . . .	"	93
42.	The Dead Bride . . . . .	"	93
43.	Will these Hands ne'er be clean ? . . . . .	"	94
44.	Gone for Ever . . . . .	"	95
45.	Present and Future . . . . .	"	95
46.	The Time of Waiting . . . . .	"	95
47.	Tasso and Leonora . . . . .	"	96
48.	Love . . . . .	1847	97
49.	The Solitary Rose . . . . .	"	97
50.	The Song of the Star . . . . .	"	97
51.	Resurrection Eve . . . . .	"	98
52.	The Dead City . . . . .	"	99
53.	The Rose . . . . .	"	103
54.	Spring Quiet . . . . .	"	103
55.	I have fought a Good Fight . . . . .	"	103
56.	Wishes . . . . .	"	104
57.	The Dream (Rest, rest ; the troubled breast) . . . . .	"	104
58.	Eleanor . . . . .	"	105
59.	Isidora . . . . .	"	106
60.	Zara . . . . .	"	107
61.	The Novice . . . . .	"	108
62.	Immalee . . . . .	"	108
63.	Heart's Chill Between . . . . .	"	109
64.	Lady Isabella . . . . .	"	109



No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
JUVENILIA, <i>continued</i> —			
65.	Night and Death . . . . .	1847	109
66.	Death's Chill Between . . . . .	„	110
67.	The Lotus-Eaters—Ulysses to Penelope . . . . .	„	111
68.	Sonnet : From the Psalms . . . . .	„	112
69.	Song (The stream moaneth as it floweth) . . . . .	„	112
70.	The World's Harmonies . . . . .	„	112
71.	The Last Answer (Written to Bouts-rimés) . . . . .	„	113

# DEVOTIONAL POEMS

72.	I do set my Bow in the Cloud . . . . .	„	114
73.	Death is Swallowed up in Victory . . . . .	1848	114
74.	Symbols . . . . .	1849	116
75.	Sweet Death . . . . .	„	116
76.	A Christmas Carol (Thank God, thank God, we do believe) . . . . .	„	117
77.	For Advent (Sweet sweet sound of distant waters, falling) . . . . .	„	117
78.	Two Pursuits . . . . .	„	118
79.	One Certainty . . . . .	„	119
80.	A Testimony . . . . .	„	119

# SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

81.	'Her seed : It shall bruise thy head' . . . . .	B. 1887	120
82.	Judge nothing before the Time . . . . .	B. 1886	121
83.	How great is little Man . . . . .	B. 1893	121
84.	Man's Life is but a Working Day . . . . .	B. 1864	121
85.	If not with hope of Life . . . . .	B. 1893	121
86.	The Day is at hand . . . . .	B. 1886	121
87.	Endure Hardness . . . . .	B. „	122
88.	'Whither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord' . . . . .	C. 1877	122
89.	Where never Tempest heaveth . . . . .	B. 1893	122
90.	Marvel of Marvels, if I myself shall behold . . . . .	B. „	122
91.	What is that to thee? Follow thou Me . . . . .	B. 1886	123
92.	'Worship God' . . . . .	B. 1893	123
93.	'Afterward he repented, and went' . . . . .	B. 1886	123
94.	'Are they not all Ministering Spirits' ? . . . . .	B. 1893	124
95.	Our Life is long. Not so, wise Angels say . . . . .	B. 1886	124
96.	Lord, what have I to offer? Sickening fear . . . . .	B. „	124
97.	Joy is but Sorrow . . . . .	B. „	125
98.	'Can I know it?'—'Nay' . . . . .	B. 1893	125
99.	'When my Heart is vexed I will Complain' (The fields are white to harvest, look and see) . . . . .	B. 1886	125
100.	'Praying Always' . . . . .	B. „	126
101.	'As thy Days, so shall thy Strength be' . . . . .	B. 1893	126

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS, <i>continued</i> —			
102.	A heavy Heart, if ever Heart was heavy . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	126
103.	If Love is not worth Loving, then Life is not worth Living . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	127
104.	What is it Jesus saith unto the Soul? . . . . .	1850, etc.	127
105.	They lie at rest, our blessed Dead . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	127
106.	'Ye that fear Him, both small and great' . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1877	127
107.	Called to be Saints . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	128
108.	The Sinner's own Fault? So it was . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	128
109.	Who cares for earthly Bread tho' white! . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	128
110.	Laughing Life cries at the Feast . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	128
111.	The End is not yet . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	129
112.	Who would wish back the Saints upon our rough . . . . .	1861	129
113.	'That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is Man' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	129
114.	Of each sad Word which is more sorrowful . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	12
115.	I see that all Things come to an end . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	130
116.	But Thy Commandment is exceeding broad . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	130
117.	Sursum Corda . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	130
118.	O ye, who are not dead and fit . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	131
119.	Where shall I find a white Rose blowing? . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1884	131
120.	Redeeming the Time . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	131
121.	Now they desire a better Country (Love said nay, while Hope kept saying) . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	132
122.	A Castle-builder's World . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	132
123.	These all wait upon Thee . . . . .	1853	132
124.	'Doeth well . . . doeth better' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	132
125.	Our Heaven must be within ourselves . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	133
126.	Vanity of Vanities (Of all the downfalls in the world) . . . . .	1858	133
127.	The Hills are tipped with Sunshine, while I walk . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	133
128.	Scarce tolerable Life, which all life long . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1884	133
129.	All Heaven is blazing yet . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	134
130.	Balm in Gilead . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	134
131.	'In the Day of his Espousals' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	134
132.	'She came from the uttermost part of the Earth' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	134
133.	Alleluia! or Alas! my Heart is crying . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	135
134.	The Passion Flower hath sprung up tall . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	135
135.	God's Acre . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	135
136.	The Flowers appear on the Earth . . . . .	1855	135
137.	'Thou knewest . . . thou oughtest therefore' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	136
138.	Go in Peace . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	136
139.	Half Dead . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	136
140.	'One of the Soldiers with a Spear pierced His Side' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	137
141.	Where Love is, there comes Sorrow . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	137
142.	Bury Hope out of sight . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	137
143.	A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	138

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS, <i>continued</i> —			
144.	One Woe is past. Come what come will . . .	B. 1893	138
145.	Take no Thought for the Morrow . . .	B. „	138
146.	Consider the Lilies of the Field (Solomon most glorious in array)	B. „	138
147.	'Son, remember' . . .	B. „	139
148.	Heaviness may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning	B. 1886	139
149.	The Will of the Lord be done . . .	B. 1893	140
150.	Lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven . . .	B. 1886	140
151.	Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth . . .	B. „	140
152.	'Then shall ye shout' . . .	B. „	140
153.	Everything that is born must die . . .	B. „	141
154.	Lord, grant us Calm, if Calm can set forth Thee . . .	B. 1893	141
155.	Changing Chimes . . .	B. „	141
156.	Thy Servant will go and fight with this Philistine . . .	B. „	141
157.	Thro' burden and heat of the Day . . .	B. 1886	142
158.	Then I commended Mirth . . .	B. „	142
159.	Sorrow hath a double Voice . . .	B. „	142
160.	Shadows to-day while Shadows show God's Will . . .	B. 1893	142
161.	Truly the Light is Sweet . . .	B. „	143
162.	Are ye not much better than they? . . .	B. „	143
163.	Yea the Sparrow hath found her an House . . .	B. „	143
164.	I am small and of no Reputation . . .	B. „	144
165.	O Christ my God Who seest the Unseen . . .	B. 1886	144
166.	Yea, if Thou wilt, Thou canst put up Thy Sword . . .	B. „	144
167.	Sweetness of Rest when Thou sheddest Rest . . .	B. 1893	144
168.	O Foolish Soul! to make thy Count . . .	B. „	144
169.	Before the Beginning Thou hast foreknown the End . . .	B. „	145
170.	The Goal in sight! Look up and sing . . .	B. 1886	145
171.	Looking back along Life's Trodden Way . . .	B. „	145
<i>(Close of Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims)</i>			
172.	The Watchers . . .	1850	145
173.	The Three Enemies . . .	1851	146
174.	Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock . . .	„	147
175.	Advent ('Come,' Thou dost say to Angels) . . .	„	148
176.	All Saints (They have brought gold and spices to my King)	1852	148
177.	Eye hath not Seen . . .	„	148
178.	A bruised Reed shall He not break . . .	„	150
179.	St. Elizabeth of Hungary . . .	„	150
180.	Moonshine . . .	„	150
181.	I look for the Lord . . .	„	151
182.	The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness (Weep yet awhile) . . .	„	152
183.	Whitsun Eve (The white dove cooeth in her downy nest) . . .	1853	152
184.	There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God (Come, blessed sleep, most full, most perfect, come) . . .	„	153
185.	A Harvest . . .	„	153

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
DEVOTIONAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
186.	The Eleventh Hour . . . . .	1853	154
187.	Sleep at Sea . . . . .	"	154
188.	Consider the Lilies of the Field (Flowers preach to us if we will hear) . . . . .	"	156
189.	Who have a Form of Godliness . . . . .	"	156

## SOME FEASTS AND FASTS

190.	Advent Sunday . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	156
191.	Advent (Earth grown old, yet still so green) . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	157
192.	Sooner or later, yet at last . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1877	157
193.	Christmas Eve . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	158
194.	Christmas Day . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	158
195.	Christmastide . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	159
196.	St. John, Apostle . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	159
197.	'Beloved, let us love one another,' says St. John . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	159
198.	Holy Innocents (They scarcely waked before they slept) . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1877	159
199.	Unspotted Lambs to follow the one Lamb . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	160
200.	Epiphany . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	160
201.	Epiphany-tide . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	161
202.	Septuagesima . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	161
203.	Sexagesima . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	161
204.	That Eden of Earth's Sunrise cannot vie . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	162
205.	Quinquagesima . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	162
206.	Piteous my Rhyme is . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	163
207.	Ash Wednesday (My God, my God, have mercy on my sin) . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	163
208.	Good Lord, to-day . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	163
209.	Lent . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	163
210.	Embertide . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	163
211.	Mid-Lent . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	164
212.	Passiontide . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	164
213.	Palm Sunday . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	164
214.	Monday in Holy Week . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	165
215.	Tuesday in Holy Week . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	165
216.	Wednesday in Holy Week . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	166
217.	Maundy Thursday . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	166
218.	Good Friday Morning . . . . .	1893	166
219.	Good Friday (Lord Jesus Christ, grown faint upon the Cross) . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	167
220.	Good Friday Evening . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	167
221.	'A Bundle of Myrrh is my Well-beloved unto Me' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	167
222.	Easter Even (The Tempest over and gone, the Calm begun) . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	167
223.	While Christ lay dead the widowed World . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	168
224.	Easter Day . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	168
225.	Easter Monday . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	168

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
SOME FEASTS AND FASTS, <i>continued</i> —			
226.	Easter Tuesday . . . . .	B. 1893	169
227.	Rogationtide . . . . .	B. 1886	169
228.	Ascension Eve . . . . .	B. 1893	169
229.	Ascension Day . . . . .	B. 1886	170
230.	Whitsun Eve ('As many as I love'—Ah Lord who lovest all)	B. 1893	170
231.	Whitsun Day . . . . .	B. 1886	170
232.	Whitsun Monday . . . . .	B. 1893	171
233.	Whitsun Tuesday . . . . .	B. 1886	171
234.	Trinity Sunday . . . . .	B. 1893	171
235.	Conversion of St. Paul . . . . .	B. 1886	172
236.	In Weariness and Painfulness St. Paul . . . . .	B. „	172
237.	Vigil of the Presentation . . . . .	B. 1893	172
238.	Feast of the Presentation . . . . .	C. 1877	172
239.	The Purification of St. Mary the Virgin . . . . .	B. 1886	173
240.	Vigil of the Annunciation . . . . .	B. 1893	173
241.	Feast of the Annunciation . . . . .	B. 1886	173
242.	Herself a Rose who bore the Rose . . . . .	C. 1877	174
243.	St. Mark . . . . .	B. 1882	174
244.	St. Barnabas . . . . .	B. „	174
245.	Vigil of St. Peter . . . . .	B. 1893	175
246.	St. Peter . . . . .	B. „	175
247.	St. Peter once : 'Lord, dost Thou wash my Feet?' . . . . .	B. „	175
248.	I followed Thee, my God, I followed Thee . . . . .	C. 1877	176
249.	Vigil of St. Bartholomew . . . . .	B. 1893	177
250.	St. Bartholomew . . . . .	B. 1886	177
251.	St. Michael and all Angels . . . . .	C. 1877	177
252.	Vigil of All Saints . . . . .	B. 1886	178
253.	All Saints (as grains of Sand, as Stars, as drops of Dew) . . . . .	B. „	178
254.	All Saints : Martyrs . . . . .	B. 1893	178
255.	'I gave a sweet Smell' . . . . .	B. 1886	179
256.	Hark ! the Alleluias of the great Salvation . . . . .	B. 1893	179
257.	A Song for the Least of all Saints . . . . .	B. „	179
258.	Sunday before Advent . . . . .	B. „	179
<i>(Close of Some Feasts and Fasts)</i>			
259.	There remaineth therefore a Rest (In the grave will be no space) . . . . .	1854	180
260.	Paradise . . . . .	„	180
261.	Ye have forgotten the Exhortation . . . . .	„	181
262.	The World . . . . .	„	182
263.	Unforgotten . . . . .	1855	182
264.	Zion Said . . . . .	„	183
265.	Hymn after Gabriele Rossetti—Two Versions . . . . .	C. „	183
266.	I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills . . . . .	1856	184
267.	How Long? . . . . .	„	185
268.	Amen . . . . .	„	186

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
DEVOTIONAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
269.	A Martyr (It is over, the horrible pain)	1856	186
270.	Now they desire (There is a sleep we have not slept)	"	186
271.	A Christmas Carol, for my Godchildren (The Shepherds had an Angel)	"	187
272.	Not Yours but You	"	188
273.	After this the Judgment	"	188
274-5-6.	Old and New Year Ditties	1856-58-60	190
277.	A Better Resurrection	1857	191
278.	The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness (when all the over-work of life)	"	192

## DIVERS WORLDS. TIME AND ETERNITY

279.	Earth has clear Call of Daily Bells	1858	193
280.	Escape to the Mountain	B. 1893	193
281.	I lift mine Eyes to see : Earth vanisheth	B. "	193
282.	Yet a Little While (Heaven is not far, tho' far the sky)	B. "	193
283.	Behold, it was very Good.	B. "	194
284.	'Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive'	1857	194
285.	This near-at-hand Land breeds Pain by Measure	C. 1877	194
286.	Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?	B. 1893	195
287.	And there was no more Sea	B. "	195
288.	Roses on a Brier	B. 1886	196
289.	We are of those who tremble at Thy Word	B. 1893	196
290.	Awake, thou that sleepest	B. "	196
291.	We know not when, we know not where	B. 1886	196
292.	I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills	B. "	197
293.	Then whose shall those Things be?	B. "	197
294.	His Banner over me was Love	B. "	197
295.	Beloved, yield thy Time to God, for He	B. 1893	197
296.	Time seems not short	B. "	198
297.	The Half Moon shows a Face of plaintive Sweetness	B. "	198
298.	As the Doves to their Windows	B. "	198
299.	Oh Knell of a passing Time	B. "	199
300.	Time passeth away with its Pleasure and Pain	B. "	199
301.	The Earth shall tremble at the Look of Him	B. "	199
302.	Time lengthening, in the lengthening seemeth long	B. "	199
303.	All Flesh is Grass	B. "	200
304.	Heaven's Chimes are slow but sure to strike at last	B. 1886	200
305.	There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people of God (Rest remains when all is done)	B. "	200
306.	Parting after Parting	1858-64	200
307.	They put their Trust in Thee and were not confounded	B. 1886	201
308.	Short is Time and only Time is bleak	B. 1893	201
309.	For Each	B. "	201
310.	For All	B.	202

(Close of Divers Worlds)



No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
DEVOTIONAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
311.	Advent (This Advent moon shines cold and clear)	1858	202
312.	Christian and Jew—A Dialogue	"	203
313.	A Burden	"	204
314.	Only Believe	"	205

NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS CITIZENS

315.	The Holy City, New Jerusalem	C. 1877	206
316.	When Wickedness is broken as a Tree	B. 1893	206
317.	Jerusalem of Fire	B. "	207
318.	She shall be brought unto the King	B. "	207
319.	Who is this that cometh up not alone	B. 1886	207
320.	Who sits with the King in His Throne? Not a Slave but a Bride	B. 1893	207
321.	Antipas	B. "	208
322.	Beautiful for Situation	B. "	208
323.	Lord, by what inconceivable dim Road	B. "	208
324.	As cold Waters to a thirsty Soul, so is good News from a far Country	B. 1886	209
325.	Cast down but not destroyed, chastened not slain	B. 1893	209
326.	Lift up thine Eyes to seek the Invisible	B. "	209
327.	Love is strong as Death (as flames that consume the mountains, as winds that coerce the sea)	B. "	210
328.	'Let them rejoice in their Beds'	B. "	210
329.	Slain in their high Places : fallen on Rest	B. "	210
330.	'What hath God wrought !'	B. "	210
331.	'Before the Throne and before the Lamb'	B. "	211
332.	'He shall go no more out'	B. "	211
333.	Yea blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection	B. "	211
334.	The Joy of Saints like Incense turned to Fire	B. "	212
335.	What are these lovely ones, yea what are these?	B. "	212
336.	The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn	B. "	212
337.	Every One that is Perfect shall be as his Master	B. 1886	213
338.	As dying, and behold we live	B. 1893	213
339.	So great a Cloud of Witnesses	B. "	213
340.	Our Mothers, lovely Women pitiful	B. "	214
341.	Safe where I cannot lie yet	B. "	214
342.	'Is it well with the Child?'	" 1865	214
343.	Dear Angels and dear disembodied Saints	B. 1893	214
344.	'To every Seed his own Body'	B. "	215
345.	'What good shall my Life do me?'	" 1858	215
<i>(Close of New Jerusalem and its Citizens)</i>			
346.	The Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge	"	215
347.	A Shadow of Dorothea	"	216
348.	For Henrietta Polydore	" 1859	217
349.	Ash Wednesday (Jesus, do I love Thee?)	"	217
350.	A Christmas Carol (Before the paling of the Stars)	"	217

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
CHRIST OUR ALL IN ALL			
351.	'The Ransomed of the Lord'	<i>B.</i> 1893	218
352.	Lord, we are Rivers running to Thy Sea	<i>B.</i> "	218
353.	'An exceeding bitter Cry'	<i>B.</i> "	218
354.	O Lord, when Thou didst call me didst Thou know	<i>B.</i> "	218
355.	Thou, God, seest me	<i>B.</i> "	219
356.	Lord Jesus, who would think that I am Thine?	<i>B.</i> 1886	219
357.	The Name of Jesus	<i>B.</i> "	220
358.	Lord God of Hosts, most Holy and most High	<i>B.</i> "	220
359.	Lord, what have I that I may offer Thee?	<i>B.</i> "	220
360.	If I should say 'my Heart is in my Home'	<i>B.</i> "	220
361.	Leaf from Leaf Christ knows	<i>C.</i> 1877	221
362.	Lord, carry me.—Nay but I grant thee Strength	<i>B.</i> 1893	221
363.	Lord, I am here.—But, Child, I look for thee	<i>B.</i> "	221
364.	New Creatures, the Creator still the same.	<i>B.</i> "	222
365.	King of Kings and Lord of Lords	<i>B.</i> "	222
366.	Thy Name, O Christ, as Incense streaming forth	<i>B.</i> "	222
367.	The Good Shepherd	<i>B.</i> "	223
368.	'Rejoice with Me'	<i>B.</i> "	223
369.	Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?	<i>B.</i> 1886	223
370.	Me and my Gift—Kind Lord, Behold	<i>B.</i> 1893	223
371.	'He cannot deny Himself'	<i>B.</i> "	223
372.	Slain from the Foundation of the World	<i>B.</i> "	224
373.	Lord Jesu, Thou art Sweetness to my Soul	<i>B.</i> "	224
374.	I, Lord, Thy foolish Sinner low and small	<i>B.</i> "	224
375.	'Because He first loved us'	<i>B.</i> "	225
376.	Lord, hast Thou so loved us, and will not we	<i>B.</i> "	225
377.	As the Dove which found no Rest	<i>B.</i> "	226
378.	Thou art fairer than the Children of Men	<i>B.</i> 1886	226
379.	'As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood'	<i>B.</i> 1893	226
380.	None other Lamb, none other Name	<i>B.</i> "	226
381.	Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend forget not	" 1859	226
382.	Surely He hath borne our Griefs	<i>B.</i> 1886	227
383.	They toil not neither do they spin	<i>B.</i> 1893	227
384.	Darkness and Light are both alike to Thee	<i>B.</i> 1886	227
385.	'And now why tarriest thou?'	<i>B.</i> 1893	228
386.	Have I not striven, my God, and watched and prayed?	" 1863	228
387.	God is our Hope and Strength	<i>B.</i> 1893	229
388.	Day and Night the Accuser makes no pause	<i>B.</i> "	229
389.	O mine Enemy	<i>B.</i> "	229
390.	Lord, dost Thou look on me, and will not I	<i>B.</i> "	229
391.	Peace I leave with you	<i>B.</i> "	230
392.	O Christ our All in Each, our All in All	<i>B.</i> 1886	230
393.	Because Thy Love hath sought me	<i>B.</i> 1893	230

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
CHRIST OUR ALL IN ALL, <i>continued</i> —			
394.	Thy fainting Spouse, yet still Thy Spouse . . . . .	B. 1893	230
395.	Like as the Hart desireth the Water Brooks . . . . .	B. „	231
396.	That where I am, there ye may be also . . . . .	B. „	231
397.	Judge not according to the Appearance . . . . .	B. „	231
398.	My God, wilt Thou accept, and will not we . . . . .	B. „	231
399.	A chill blank World. Yet over the utmost Sea . . . . .	B. „	232
400.	The Chiefest among Ten Thousand . . . . .	B. „	232
<i>(Close of Christ our All in All)</i>			
401.	Easter Even (There is nothing more that they can do) . . . . .	1861	232
402.	The Offering of the New Law . . . . .	„	233
403.	By the Waters of Babylon (By the waters of Babylon) . . . . .	„	233
404.	Within the Veil . . . . .	„	234
405.	Good Friday (Am I a stone, and not a sheep) . . . . .	1862	234
406.	Out of the Deep . . . . .	„	234
407.	For a Mercy Received . . . . .	1863	235
408.	Martyrs' Song . . . . .	„	236
409.	Consider . . . . .	„	237
410.	The Lowest Place (Give me the lowest place ; not that I dare) . . . . .	„	237
411.	Come unto Me . . . . .	1864	237
412.	Who shall Deliver me ? . . . . .	„	238
413.	In Patience . . . . .	„	238
414.	None with Him . . . . .	„	238
415.	By the Waters of Babylon (Here where I dwell I waste to skin and bone). . . . .	„	239
416.	Despised and Rejected . . . . .	„	241
417.	Weary in Well-doing . . . . .	„	242
418.	Birds of Paradise . . . . .	„	242
419.	Dost Thou not care ? . . . . .	„	242
420.	I know you not . . . . .	C. „	243
421.	If Only . . . . .	1865	244
422.	Long Barren . . . . .	„	244
423.	Young Death . . . . .	„	244
424.	Mother Country . . . . .	1866	245
425.	After Communion . . . . .	„	246
426.	A Christmas Carol (In the bleak mid-winter) . . . . .	B. 1872	246
427.	Wrestling . . . . .	B. 1875	247
428.	The Master is come, and calleth for Thee . . . . .	B. 1876	248
429.	When my Heart is vexed, I will complain (O Lord, how canst Thou say Thou lovest me) . . . . .	B. „	248
430.	Saints and Angels . . . . .	B. „	249
431.	A Rose Plant in Jericho . . . . .	B. „	250
432.	Patience of Hope . . . . .	C. 1880	250
433.	I will arise . . . . .	B. 1882	251
434.	A Prodigal Son . . . . .	B. „	251

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
	DEVOTIONAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —		
435.	For Thine own Sake, O my God . . . . .	B. 1882	252
436.	Until the Day Break . . . . .	B. „	252
437.	Of him that was ready to Perish . . . . .	B. „	253
438.	Behold the Man . . . . .	B. „	254
439.	The Descent from the Cross . . . . .	B. „	254
440.	It is Finished . . . . .	B. „	254
441.	An Easter Carol . . . . .	B. „	255
442.	Behold a Shaking . . . . .	B. „	255
443.	All Saints (They are flocking from the East) . . . . .	B. „	256
444.	'Take care of Him' . . . . .	B. „	257
445.	A Martyr—The Vigil of the Feast (Inner not outer, without gnash of teeth) . . . . .	B. „	257
446.	Why? . . . . .	B. „	260
447.	Love is strong as Death (I have not sought Thee, I have not found Thee) . . . . .	B. „	261
448.	'If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not' . . . . .	B. „	261
449.	The Thread of Life . . . . .	B. „	262
450.	A Sick Child's Meditation . . . . .	C. 1885	263

#### OUT OF THE DEEP HAVE I CALLED UNTO THEE, O LORD

451.	Alone Lord God, in Whom our Trust and Peace . . . . .	B. 1893	264
452.	Seven Vials hold Thy Wrath, but what can hold . . . . .	B. „	264
453.	Where neither Rust nor Moth doth corrupt . . . . .	B. „	264
454.	As the Sparks fly upwards . . . . .	B. „	265
455.	Lord, make us all love all, that when we meet . . . . .	B. „	265
456.	O Lord, I am ashamed to seek Thy Face . . . . .	B. „	265
457.	It is not Death, O Christ, to die for Thee . . . . .	B. „	266
458.	Lord, grant us Eyes to See and Ears to Hear . . . . .	B. „	266
459.	'Cried out with Tears' . . . . .	B. „	266
460.	O Lord on Whom we gaze and dare not gaze . . . . .	B. „	267
461.	'I will come and heal him' . . . . .	B. „	267
462.	Ah Lord, Lord, if my Heart were right with Thine . . . . .	B. „	267
463.	The Gold of that Land is good . . . . .	B. „	268
464.	Weigh all my Faults and Follies righteously . . . . .	B. 1886	268
465.	Lord, grant me Grace to love Thee in my pain . . . . .	B. „	268
466.	Lord, make me one with Thine own Faithful Ones . . . . .	B. 1893	269
467.	Light of Light . . . . .	B. „	269

(Close of Out of the Deep have I called unto thee, O Lord)

#### GIFTS AND GRACES

468.	Love loveth Thee, and Wisdom loveth Thee . . . . .	B. „	270
469.	Lord, give me Love that I may love Thee much . . . . .	B. „	270
470.	'As a King . . . unto the King' . . . . .	B. 1886	270

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
	GIFTS AND GRACES, <i>continued</i> —		
71.	O ye who love To-day . . . . .	B. 1893	270
72.	Life that was born to-day . . . . .	B. „	271
73.	Perfect Love casteth out Fear . . . . .	B. „	271
74.	Hope is the Counterpoise of Fear . . . . .	B. „	271
75.	Subject to like Passions as we are . . . . .	B. „	271
76.	Experience bows a sweet contented Face . . . . .	B. „	272
77.	Charity never Faileth . . . . .	B. „	272
78.	The Greatest of these is Charity . . . . .	B. „	272
79.	All beneath the Sun hasteth . . . . .	B. „	273
80.	If thou be Dead, forgive and thou shalt Live . . . . .	B. „	273
81.	Let Patience have her perfect Work (Can man rejoice who lives in hourly fear?) . . . . .	B. „	273
82.	Patience must dwell with Love, for Love and Sorrow . . . . .	B. „	274
83.	Let everything that hath Breath praise the Lord . . . . .	B. „	274
84.	What is the Beginning? Love. What the Course? Love still . . . . .	B. „	274
85.	Lord, make me Pure . . . . .	B. „	274
86.	Love, to be Love, must walk Thy way . . . . .	B. „	274
87.	Lord, I am Feeble and of Mean Account . . . . .	B. „	275
88.	Tune me, O Lord, into one Harmony . . . . .	B. „	275
89.	They shall be as white as Snow . . . . .	B. „	275
90.	Thy Lilies drink the Dew . . . . .	B. 1886	275
91.	When I was in Trouble I called upon the Lord . . . . .	B. „	276
92.	Grant us such Grace that we may work Thy Will . . . . .	B. 1893	276
93.	Who hath despised the Day of Small Things? . . . . .	B. „	276
94.	'Do this, and he doeth it' . . . . .	B. „	277
95.	'That no Man take thy Crown' . . . . .	B. „	277
96.	Ye are come unto Mount Sion . . . . .	B. „	277
97.	Sit down in the Lowest Room . . . . .	B. „	278
98.	Lord, it is good for us to be here . . . . .	B. „	278
99.	Lord, grant us Grace to rest upon Thy Word . . . . .	B. „	278
	(Close of Gifts and Graces)		
100.	Christmas Carols (1. Whoso hears a Chiming for Christmas at the Nighest. 2. A holy heavenly Chime. 3. Lo Newborn Jesus) . . . . .	C. 1887	278
101.	A Hope Carol . . . . .	B. 1889	280
102.	Cardinal Newman . . . . .	1890	280
103.	Yea I have a Goodly Heritage . . . . .	C. „	280
104.	A Candlemas Dialogue . . . . .	B. 1891	281
105.	Mary Magdalene and the other Mary . . . . .	B. „	281
106.	A Death of a First-born . . . . .	1892	282
107.	Faint yet Pursuing . . . . .	C. „	282

No.	Title.	Year.	Page
THE WORLD. SELF-DESTRUCTION			
510.	A Vain Shadow . . . . .	B. 1893	28
511.	Lord, save Us, We Perish . . . . .	B. „	28
512.	What is this above thy Head . . . . .	B. „	28
513.	Babylon the Great . . . . .	B. „	28
514.	Standing afar off for the Fear of her Torment . . . . .	B. „	28
515.	O Lucifer, Son of the Morning . . . . .	B. „	28
516.	Alas alas for the Self-destroyed . . . . .	B. „	28
517.	As Froth on the Face of the Deep . . . . .	B. „	28
518.	Where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched . . . . .	B. „	28
519.	Toll, Bell, toll—for Hope is flying . . . . .	B. „	28
	(Close of the World. Self-destruction)		
520.	All Things . . . . .	B. „	28
521.	Heaven Overarches . . . . .	C. „	28

## GENERAL POEMS

522.	A Portrait . . . . .	1847-50	28
523.	The whole Head is Sick and the whole Heart Faint . . . . .	1847	28
524.	Vanity of Vanities (Ah woe is me for pleasure that is vain) . . . . .	„	28
525.	Three Stages—1. A Pause of Thought . . . . .	1848	28
526.	2. The End of the First Part . . . . .	1849	28
527.	3. I thought to deal the Death-stroke at a Blow . . . . .	1854	28
528.	Lady Montrevor . . . . .	1848	29
529.	Song (She sat and sang alway) . . . . .	„	29
530.	Bitter for Sweet . . . . .	„	29
531.	Song (When I am dead, my dearest) . . . . .	„	29
532.	On Keats . . . . .	1849	29
533.	Have Patience . . . . .	„	29
534.	Song (Oh roses for the flush of youth) . . . . .	„	29
535.	An End . . . . .	„	29
536.	Dream Land . . . . .	„	29
537.	After Death . . . . .	„	29
538.	Rest . . . . .	„	29
539.	Looking Forward . . . . .	„	29
540.	Life Hidden . . . . .	„	29
541.	Remember . . . . .	„	29
542.	Sound Sleep . . . . .	„	29
543.	Queen Rose . . . . .	„	29
544.	How one Chose . . . . .	„	29
545.	Seeking Rest . . . . .	„	29
546.	Endurance . . . . .	C. 1850	29
547.	Withering . . . . .	C. „	29
548.	Twilight Calm . . . . .	„	29



No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
GENERAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
549.	Two Thoughts of Death . . . . .	1850	298
550.	Three Moments . . . . .	"	299
551.	Is and Was . . . . .	"	300
552.	Song (We buried her among the flowers) . . . . .	"	300
553.	Annie . . . . .	"	301
554.	A Dirge (She was as sweet as violets in the Spring)	1851	301
555.	A Summer Wish . . . . .	"	302
556.	Song (It is not for her even brow) . . . . .	"	302
557.	A Fair World though a Fallen . . . . .	"	302
558.	Books in the Running Brooks . . . . .	1852	303
559.	The Summer is Ended . . . . .	"	304
560.	After All . . . . .	"	304
561.	From the Antique (The wind shall lull us yet) . . . . .	"	304
562.	To what Purpose is this Waste? . . . . .	1853	305
563.	Next of Kin . . . . .	"	307
564.	For Rosaline's Album . . . . .	"	307
565.	What? . . . . .	"	308
566.	A Pause . . . . .	"	308
567.	Three Seasons . . . . .	"	308
568.	Holy Innocents (Sleep, little Baby, sleep) . . . . .	"	309
569.	Seasons (In Springtime when the leaves are young)	"	309
570.	Buried . . . . .	"	309
571.	A Wish . . . . .	"	309
572.	Two Parted . . . . .	"	309
573.	Autumn (Care flieth) . . . . .	"	310
574.	Seasons (Crocuses and snowdrops wither) . . . . .	"	310
575.	Ballad . . . . .	1854	310
576.	A Soul . . . . .	"	311
577.	The Bourne . . . . .	"	311
578.	Dream-love . . . . .	"	312
579.	From the Antique (It's a weary life, it is, she said)	"	312
580.	Long Looked For . . . . .	"	313
581.	Listening . . . . .	"	313
582.	Dead before Death . . . . .	"	313
583.	Echo . . . . .	"	314
584.	The First Spring Day . . . . .	1855	314
585.	My Dream (Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night)	"	315
586.	The Last Look . . . . .	"	316
587.	I have a Message unto Thee . . . . .	"	316
588.	Cobwebs . . . . .	"	317
589.	May (I cannot tell you how it was) . . . . .	"	318
590.	An After-thought . . . . .	"	318
591.	To the End . . . . .	"	319
592.	May ('Sweet Life is dead'—'Not so')	"	320

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
GENERAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
593.	Shut out . . . . .	1856	320
594.	By the Water . . . . .	"	321
595.	A Chilly Night . . . . .	"	321
596.	Let Patience have her perfect Work (I saw a bird alone) . . . . .	"	322
597.	In the Lane . . . . .	"	322
598.	Acme . . . . .	"	323
599.	A Bed of Forget-me-nots . . . . .	"	323
600.	Look on This Picture and on This . . . . .	"	323
601.	Gone Before . . . . .	"	325
602.	The Hour and the Ghost . . . . .	"	326
603.	Light Love . . . . .	"	327
604.	Downcast . . . . .	"	328
605.	A Triad . . . . .	"	329
606.	Love from the North . . . . .	"	329
607.	In an Artist's Studio . . . . .	"	330
608.	Fata Morgana . . . . .	1857	330
609.	One Day . . . . .	"	330
610.	Introspective . . . . .	"	331
611.	A Peal of Bells . . . . .	"	331
612.	In the Round Tower at Jhansi . . . . .	"	332
613.	Day-dreams . . . . .	"	332
614.	A Nightmare (Fragment) . . . . .	"	333
615.	Another Spring . . . . .	"	333
616.	For One Sake . . . . .	"	333
617.	Memory . . . . .	1857-65	334
618.	A Birthday . . . . .	1857	335
619.	An Apple Gathering . . . . .	"	335
620.	Winter : My Secret (I tell my secret? No indeed, not I) . . . . .	"	336
621.	My Friend . . . . .	"	336
622.	Maude Clare . . . . .	1858	337
623.	Autumn (I dwell alone—I dwell alone, alone) . . . . .	"	337
624.	Up-hill . . . . .	"	339
625.	At Home . . . . .	"	339
626.	To-day and 'To-morrow . . . . .	"	339
627.	The Convent Threshold . . . . .	"	340
628.	Yef a Little While . . . . .	"	342
629.	Father and Lover . . . . .	C. "	343
630.	By the Sea . . . . .	1858	343
631.	Winter Rain . . . . .	1859	344
632.	L. E. L. . . . .	"	344
633.	Spring . . . . .	"	345
634.	What Good shall my Life do me? . . . . .	"	346
635.	Cousin Kate . . . . .	"	347
636.	Sister Maude . . . . .	C. 1860	348

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
GENERAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
637.	Noble Sisters . . . . .	1860	348
638.	No, thank you, John . . . . .	"	349
639.	Mirage . . . . .	"	350
640.	The Lambs of Grasmere, 1860 . . . . .	"	350
641.	Promises like Pie-crust . . . . .	1861	350
642.	Wife to Husband . . . . .	"	351
643.	Better so . . . . .	"	351
644.	Our Widowed Queen . . . . .	"	352
645.	In Progress . . . . .	1862	352
646.	On the Wing . . . . .	"	352
647.	Song (Two doves upon the self-same branch) . . . . .	B. 1863	353
648.	The Queen of Hearts . . . . .	1863	353
649.	Seasons (Oh the cheerful Budding-time) . . . . .	"	354
650.	June . . . . .	"	354
651.	A Ring Posy . . . . .	"	354
652.	Helen Grey . . . . .	"	355
653.	A Year's Windfalls . . . . .	"	355
654.	A Bird's-Eye View . . . . .	"	357
655.	A Dumb Friend . . . . .	"	358
656.	Life and Death . . . . .	"	358
657.	Twilight Night . . . . .	1863-64	359
658.	The Poor Ghost . . . . .	1863	359
659.	Margery . . . . .	"	360
660.	Last Night . . . . .	"	361
661.	Somewhere or other . . . . .	"	362
662.	A Chill . . . . .	"	362
663.	Summer (Winter is cold-hearted) . . . . .	1864	363
664.	Beauty is Vain . . . . .	"	363
665.	What would I give! . . . . .	"	363
666.	The Ghost's Petition . . . . .	"	364
667.	Hoping against Hope . . . . .	"	365
668.	Sunshine . . . . .	"	366
669.	Meeting (If we shall live, we live) . . . . .	"	366
670.	Twice . . . . .	"	366
671.	A Farm Walk . . . . .	"	367
672.	Under Willows . . . . .	"	368
673.	A Sketch . . . . .	"	368
674.	Bird or Beast? . . . . .	"	369
675.	Songs in a Cornfield . . . . .	"	369
676.	If I had Words . . . . .	"	371
677.	Jessie Cameron . . . . .	"	371
678.	Grown and Flown . . . . .	"	373
679.	Eve . . . . .	1865	373
680.	Shall I forget? . . . . .	"	374

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
GENERAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
681.	Amor Mundi . . . . .	1865	374
682.	From Sunset to Star Rise . . . . .	"	375
683.	Maggie a Lady . . . . .	"	375
684.	Dead Hope . . . . .	"	377
685.	En Route . . . . .	"	377
686.	Enrica, 1865 . . . . .	"	377
687.	Husband and Wife . . . . .	"	378
688.	Italia, io ti Saluto . . . . .	"	378
689.	What to do? . . . . .	"	379
690.	A Daughter of Eve . . . . .	"	379
691.	A Dirge (Why were you born when the snow was falling?) . . . . .	"	379
692.	An 'Immurata' Sister . . . . .	C. "	380
693.	Once for all (Margaret) . . . . .	1866	380
694.	A Smile and a Sigh . . . . .	"	380
695.	In a certain Place . . . . .	"	381
696.	Cannot Sweeten . . . . .	"	381
697.	Of my Life . . . . .	"	382
698.	Song (Oh what comes over the sea) . . . . .	"	382
699.	From Metastasio . . . . .	C. 1868	382
700.	Autumn Violets . . . . .	B. 1869	383
701.	They desire a Better Country (I would not if I could undo my past) . . . . .	B. 1870	383
702.	By Way of Remembrance . . . . .	1870	384
703.	An Echo from Willow-wood . . . . .	C. "	385
704-705.	The German-French Campaign, 1870-71. 1. Thy Brother's Blood crieth. 2. To-day for me . . . . .	1871	386
706.	Venus's Looking-glass . . . . .	1872	387
707.	Love lies Bleeding . . . . .	C. "	388
708.	Days of Vanity . . . . .	B. 1873	388
709.	A Bird Song . . . . .	B. "	388
710.	Cor Mio (Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts) . . . . .	C. 1875	389
711.	Meeting (I said good-bye in hope) . . . . .	C. "	389
712.	A Green Cornfield . . . . .	B. 1876	389
713.	A Bride Song . . . . .	B. "	390
714.	Confluents . . . . .	B. "	390
715.	Bird Raptures . . . . .	B. "	391
716-726.	Valentines to my Mother . . . . .	1876-86	391
727.	Mirrors of Life and Death . . . . .	B. 1878	393
728.	An October Garden . . . . .	B. "	395
729.	Freaks of Fashion . . . . .	C. "	395
730.	Yet a Little While (I dreamed and did not seek : to-day I seek) . . . . .	B. 1879	397
731.	Parted . . . . .	C. 1880	397
732.	To-day's Burden . . . . .	C. 1881	397
733.	The Key-note . . . . .	B. 1882	397
734.	He and She . . . . .	B. "	398

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
GENERAL POEMS, <i>continued</i> —			
735.	Luscious and Sorrowful (Beautiful, tender, wasting away for sorrow)	<i>B.</i> 1882	398
736.	De Profundis . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	398
737.	Tempus Fugit . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	398
738.	Golden Glories . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	399
739.	Johnny (Johnny had a golden head)	<i>B.</i> "	399
740.	'Hollow-sounding and Mysterious'	<i>B.</i> "	400
741.	Maiden May . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	401
742.	Till To-morrow (Long have I longed till I am tired)	<i>B.</i> "	402
743.	Death-watches . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	402
744.	Touching 'Never' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	403
745.	Brandons Both . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	403
746.	A Life's Parallels . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	405
747.	At Last . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	405
748.	Golden Silences . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	406
749.	In the Willow Shade . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	406
750.	Fluttered Wings . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	407
751.	A Fisher-Wife . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	408
752.	What's in a Name? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	408
753.	Mariana . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	408
754.	Memento Mori . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	409
755.	One foot on Sea and one on Shore . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	409
756.	A Song of Flight . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	409
757.	Buds and Babies . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	410
758.	Boy Johnny (If you'll busk you as a Bride)	<i>B.</i> "	410
759.	Summer is ended . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	410
760.	Passing and Glassing . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	410
761.	Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde, 1674 . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	411
762.	Pastime . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	411
763.	Birchington Churchyard . . . . .	"	412
764.	Resurgam . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1883	412
765.	Michael F. M. Rossetti . . . . .	"	412
766.	A Wintry Sonnet . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1884	413
767.	One Seaside Grave . . . . .	"	413
768.	Who shall say? . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1884	414
769.	One Swallow does not make a Summer . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	414
770.	A Frog's Fate . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	414
771.	'There is a Budding Morrow in Midnight'	<i>B.</i> 1890	415
772.	The Way of the World . . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1890	415
773.	A Helpmeet for Him . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1891	415
774.	Exultate Deo . . . . .	<i>B.</i> "	415
775.	Brother Bruin . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1892	416
776.	To my Fior-di-Lisa . . . . .	"	417
777.	To-morrow (Passing away the bliss)	<i>B.</i> 1893	417
778.	Sleeping at Last . . . . .	<i>C.</i> "	417

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
POEMS FOR CHILDREN, AND MINOR VERSE			
779.	Sonnets : written to Bouts-rimés (1 to 8) . . . . .	1848	417
780.	„ „ „ (9) The Plague . . . . .	„	420
781.	„ „ „ (10a to c) . . . . .	C. „	420
782.	To Lalla, reading my Verses Topsy-turvy . . . . .	1849	421
783.	Two Enigmas . . . . .	„	422
784.	Two Charades . . . . .	„	422
785.	A Bouts-rimés Sonnet . . . . .	„	423
786.	Portraits . . . . .	1853	423
787.	Charon . . . . .	„	423
788.	The P. R. B.—1 . . . . .	„	424
789.	The P. R. B.—2 . . . . .	„	424
790.	Child's Talk in April . . . . .	1855	424
791.	Winter (Sweet Blackbird is silenced with chaffinch and thrush) . . . . .	1856	425
792.	Love's Name . . . . .	C. 1869	425
793.	Golden Holly . . . . .	C. 1872	426

## SING-SONG—A NURSERY RHYME-BOOK

794.	Angels at the Foot . . . . .	B. 1873	426
795.	Love me—I love you . . . . .	B. „	426
796.	My Baby has a Father and a Mother . . . . .	B. „	426
797.	Our little Baby fell asleep . . . . .	B. „	426
798.	Kookoorookoo ! kookoorookoo ! . . . . .	B. „	426
799.	Baby cry . . . . .	B. „	426
800.	Eight o'clock . . . . .	B. „	426
801.	Bread and Milk for Breakfast . . . . .	B. „	427
802.	There's Snow on the Fields . . . . .	B. „	427
803.	Dead in the Cold, a song-singing Thrush . . . . .	B. „	427
804.	I dug and dug amongst the Snow . . . . .	B. „	427
805.	A City Plum is not a Plum . . . . .	B. „	427
806.	Your Brother has a Falcon . . . . .	B. „	427
807.	Hear what the mournful Linnets say . . . . .	B. „	427
808.	A Baby's Cradle with no Baby in it . . . . .	B. „	427
809.	Hop-o'-my-thumb and Little Jack Horner . . . . .	B. „	428
810.	Hope is like a Harebell trembling from its Birth . . . . .	B. „	428
811.	O Wind, why do you never rest . . . . .	B. „	428
812.	Crying, my little One, footsore and weary . . . . .	B. „	428
813.	Growing in the Vale . . . . .	B. „	428
814.	A Linnet in a gilded Cage . . . . .	B. „	428
815.	Wrens and Robins in the Hedge . . . . .	B. „	428
816.	My Baby has a mottled Fist . . . . .	B. „	428
817.	Why did Baby die . . . . .	B. „	428
818.	If all were Rain and never Sun . . . . .	B. „	429



<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
	SING-SONG—A NURSERY RHYME-BOOK, <i>continued</i> —		
819.	O Wind, where have you been . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	429
820.	Brownie, Brownie, let down your Milk . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1894	429
821.	On the grassy Banks . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	429
822.	Rushes in a watery Place . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	429
823.	Minnie and Mattie . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	429
824.	Heartsease in my Garden-bed . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
825.	If I were a Queen . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
826.	What are heavy? Sea-sand and Sorrow . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
827.	Stroke a Flint, and there is nothing to admire . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1894	430
828.	There is but one May in the Year . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	430
829.	The Summer Nights are short . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
830.	The Days are clear . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
831.	Twist me a Crown of Wind-flowers . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	430
832.	Brown and Furry . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
833.	A Toadstool comes up in a Night . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
834.	A Pocket-handkerchief to hem . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
835.	If a Pig wore a Wig . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
836.	Seldom 'Can't' . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
837.	1 and 1 are 2 . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
838.	How many Seconds in a Minute? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	431
839.	What will you give me for my Pound? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	432
840.	January cold desolate . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	432
841.	What is pink? A Rose is pink . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	432
842.	Mother shake the Cherry-tree . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	432
843.	A Pin has a Head, but has no Hair . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	432
844.	Hopping Frog, hop here and be seen . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
845.	Where innocent bright-eyed Daisies are . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
846.	The City Mouse lives in a House . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
847.	What does the Donkey bray about? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
848.	Three Plum Buns . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
849.	A Motherless soft Lambkin . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	433
850.	Dancing on the Hill-tops . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
851.	When Fishes set Umbrellas up . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
852.	The Peacock has a score of Eyes . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
853.	Pussy has a whiskered Face . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
854.	The Dog lies in his Kennel . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
855.	If Hope grew on a Bush . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
856.	I planted a Hand . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
857.	Under the Ivy Bush . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	434
858.	I am a King . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1894	434
859.	There is one that has a Head without an Eye . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	435
860.	If a Mouse could fly . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	435
861.	Sing me a Song . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	435
862.	The Lily has an air . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	435

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
<i>SING-SONG—A NURSERY RHYME-BOOK, continued—</i>			
863.	Margaret has a Milking-pail . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	435
864.	In the Meadow—What in the Meadow? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	435
865.	A frisky Lamb . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	435
866.	Mix a Pancake . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
867.	The Wind has such a rainy Sound . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
868.	Three little Children . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
869.	Fly away, fly away over the Sea . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
870.	Minnie bakes Oaten Cakes . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
871.	A White Hen Sitting . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
872.	Currants on a Bush . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	436
873.	Playing at Bob Cherry . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1894	436
874.	I have but one Rose in the World . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	437
875.	Rosy Maiden Winifred . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	437
876.	Blind from my Birth . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1894	437
877.	When the Cows come home the Milk is coming . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	437
878.	Roses blushing Red and White . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	437
879.	Ding a Ding . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	437
880.	A Ring upon her Finger . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	437
881.	Ferry me across the Water . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
882.	When a mounting Skylark sings . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
883.	Who has seen the Wind? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
884.	The Horses of the Sea . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
885.	O Sailor, come Ashore . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
886.	A Diamond or a Coal? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
887.	An Emerald is as green as Grass . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	438
888.	Boats sail on the Rivers . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	439
889.	The Lily has a smooth Stalk . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	439
890.	Hurt no living Thing . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	439
891.	I caught a little Lady-bird . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873-94	439
892.	All the Bells were ringing . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	439
893.	Wee wee Husband . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	439
894.	I have a little Husband . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	439
895.	The dear Old Woman in the Lane . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873-94	440
896.	Swift and Sure the Swallow . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	440
897.	I dreamt I caught a little Owl . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	440
898.	What does the Bee do? . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	440
899.	I have a Poll Parrot . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873-94	440
900.	A House of Cards . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	440
901.	The Rose with such a bonny Blush . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	440
902.	The Rose that blushes Rosy Red . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	440
903.	Oh fair to See . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	440
904.	Clever little Willie Wee . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873-94	441
905.	The Peach-tree on the Southern Wall . . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	441
906.	A Rose has Thorns as well as Honey . . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	441

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
<i>SING-SONG—A NURSERY RHYME-BOOK, continued—</i>			
907.	Is the Moon tired? She looks so pale . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1873	441
908.	If Stars dropped out of Heaven . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	441
909.	Good-bye in Fear, good-bye in Sorrow . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	441
910.	If the Sun could tell us half . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
911.	If the Moon came from Heaven . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
912.	O Lady Moon, your Horns point toward the East . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
913.	What do the Stars do . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
914.	Motherless Baby and Babyless Mother . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
915.	Crimson Curtains round my Mother's Bed . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
916.	Baby lies so fast asleep . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
917.	I know a Baby, such a Baby . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
918.	Lullaby, oh lullaby! . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	442
919.	Lie a-bed . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	443
<i>(Close of Sing-song)</i>			
920.	An Alphabet . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1875	443
921.	Hadrian's Death-song Translated . . . .	„ 1876	444
922.	My Mouse . . . .	„ 1877	444
923.	A Poor Old Dog . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1879	444
924.	To William Bell Scott . . . .	„ 1882	444
925.	Counterblast on Penny Trumpet . . . .	„ „	444
926.	Mole and Earthworm . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1886	445
927.	To Mary Rossetti . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1887	445
928.	What will it be? . . . .	<i>B.</i> 1893	445
929.	Speechless . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	445
930.	Pleading . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	445
931.	A Sorrowful Sigh of a Prisoner . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	446
932.	Scarlet . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	446
933.	Homewards . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	446
934.	Couplet (Faith and Hope are Wings to Love) . . . .	<i>B.</i> „	446

# ITALIAN POEMS

935.	Versi (Figlia, la Madre disse) . . . .	„ 1849	446
936.	L'Incognita . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1850	446
937.	Nigella . . . .	<i>C.</i> „	447
938.	Chiesa e Signore . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1860	447

# IL ROSSEGGIAR DELL' ORIENTE

939.	Amor Dormente? . . . .	„ 1862	447
940.	Amor si sveglia? . . . .	„ 1863	447
941.	Si rimanda la Tocca-caldaja . . . .	<i>C.</i> 1864	448
942.	Blumine risponde : . . . .	„ 1867	448
943.	Lassù fia caro il rivederci . . . .	„ „	448
944.	Non son io la Rosa ma vi stetti appresso . . . .	„ „	448

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
IL ROSSEGGIAR DELL' ORIENTE, <i>continued</i> —			
945.	Lassuso il caro Fiore . . . . .	1867	449
946.	Sapessi pure . . . . .	"	449
947.	Iddio c' illumini . . . . .	"	449
948.	Amicizia . . . . .	"	450
949.	Luscious and Sorrowful (Uccello delle rose e del dolore) . . . . .	"	450
950.	O Forza irresistibile Dell' umile Preghiera . . . . .	"	450
951.	Finestra mia orientale . . . . .	"	451
952.	Eppure allora venivi . . . . .	1868	451
953.	Per Preferenza . . . . .	"	451
954.	Oggi . . . . .	"	452
955.	Ti do l' addio . . . . .	"	452
956.	Ripetizione . . . . .	"	452
957.	Amico e più che Amico Mio . . . . .	"	452
958.	Nostre volontà quieti Virtù di Carità . . . . .	"	452
959.	Se Così Fosse . . . . .	"	453
<i>(Close of Il Rosseggjar dell' Oriente)</i>			
960.	L' Uommibatto . . . . .	1869	453
961.	Cor Mio (Cor mio, cor mio) . . . . .	C. 1870	453
962.	Adriano . . . . .	1876	453

## NINNA-NANNA

963.	Angeli al Capo, al Piede . . . . .	1878	453
964.	Amami, t' Amo . . . . .	"	453
965.	E Babbo e Mamma ha il nostro Figliolino . . . . .	"	454
966.	S' addormentò la nostra Figliolina . . . . .	"	454
967.	Cuccurucù, cuccurucù . . . . .	"	454
968.	Ohibò Piccina . . . . .	"	454
969.	Otto ore suonano . . . . .	"	454
970.	Nel Verno accanto al Fuoco . . . . .	"	454
971.	Gran Freddo è infuori, e dentro è Freddo un poco . . . . .	"	454
972.	Scavai la Neve, sì che scavai . . . . .	"	455
973.	Sì che il Fratello s' ha un Falconcello . . . . .	"	455
974.	Udite, si dolgono mesti Fringuelli . . . . .	"	455
975.	Ahi Culla vuota ed ahi Sepolcro pieno . . . . .	"	455
976.	Lugubre e vagabondo in Terra e in Mare . . . . .	"	455
977.	Aura dolcissima, ma donde siete? . . . . .	"	455
978.	Foss' io Regina . . . . .	"	455
979.	Pesano Rena e Pena . . . . .	"	455
980.	Basta una Notte a maturare il Fungo . . . . .	"	456
981.	Porco la Zucca fitta in Parrucca . . . . .	"	456
982.	Salta, Ranocchio, e mostrati . . . . .	"	456
983.	Spunta la Margherita . . . . .	"	456
984.	Agnellina Orfanellina . . . . .	"	456

No.	Title.	Year.	Page.
	NINNA-NANNA, <i>continued</i> —		
985.	Amico Pesce, piover vorrà . . . . .	1878	456
986.	Sposa velata . . . . .	"	456
987.	Cavalli marittimi . . . . .	"	457
988.	O Marinaro, che mi apporti tu? . . . . .	"	457
989.	Arrossisce la Rosa, e perchè mai? . . . . .	"	457
990.	La Rosa china il Volto rossegiato . . . . .	"	457
991.	O Ciliegia infiorita . . . . .	"	457
992.	In Tema e in Pena addio . . . . .	"	457
993.	D' un Sonno profondissimo . . . . .	"	457
994.	Ninna-nanna, Ninna-nanna . . . . .	"	457
995.	Capo che chinasi . . . . .	"	458
	(Close of Ninna-nanna)		
996.	Sognando . . . . .	C. 1890	458
	NOTES BY W. M. ROSSETTI . . . . .		459
	LIST OF FIRST LINES . . . . .		495

## SUPPLEMENT TO LIST OF CONTENTS

In the List of Contents the poems have been numbered, so as to facilitate reference to the present Table.

The under-mentioned poems were printed (not published) in the *Verses* (1847):—

Nos. 17, 20, 23 to 26, 28, 29, 30, 32 to 40, 42 to 47, 49 to 53, 57, 60, 64.

The under-mentioned were first published since Christina Rossetti's death, December 1894:—

Nos. 4, 18, 19, 21, 22, 31, 41, 55, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62, 65, 67 to 73, 76, 77, 78, 172, 175, 176, 177, 179 to 186, 189, 259, 261, 263, 264, 265, 267, 269 to 272, 278, 313, 314, 347, 348, 401, 402, 403, 406, 407, 413, 414, 500, 521, 523, 524, 526, 527, 528, 532, 533, 539, 540, 543 to 547, 549 to 554, 556 to 565, 568 to 576, 579, 580, 581, 586, 587, 588, 590, 591, 592, 594 to 601, 607, 610, 613, 614, 616, 626, 628, 634, 641, 643, 644, 645, 649, 650, 655, 657, 659, 668, 669, 672, 673, 676, 685, 689, 695 to 699, 702, 710, 711, 716 to 726, 731, 767, 776, 778 to 782, 786, 789, 791, 793, 922, 925, 938 to 996.

The under-mentioned are now for the first time published:—

Nos. 27, 423, 604, 785, 788, 820, 827, 859, 873, 877, 927, 934.

All other poems, not above enumerated, were issued during the authoress's lifetime, whether in volumes or otherwise—very generally in volumes.





## APPENDIX

### A.—CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTED EDITION ISSUED BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

#### THE FIRST SERIES

Goblin Market.	A Bird's-eye View.
The Prince's Progress.	Fata Morgana.
Maiden-Song.	Memory.
Dream Land.	'They desire a Better Country.'
At Home.	Child's Talk in April.
The Poor Ghost.	A Green Cornfield.
Grown and Flown.	The Lambs of Grasmere, 1860.
A Farm Walk.	A Birthday.
A Portrait.	A Bride Song.
By the Sea.	Confluents.
Gone for ever.	Remember.
Love from the North.	After Death.
Maggie a Lady.	The Lowest Room.
From Sunset to Star Rise.	Dream-Love.
Spring Quiet.	An End.
Winter Rain.	Dead Hope.
Vanity of Vanities.	Twice.
Days of Vanity.	My Dream.
The Ghost's Petition.	Songs in a Cornfield.
Once for all.	On the Wing.
Enrica, 1865.	L. E. L.
A Chill.	Song.
Somewhere or Other.	The Hour and the Ghost.
Noble Sisters.	Shall I forget.
Jessie Cameron.	Life and Death.
Spring.	A Summer Wish.
Summer.	A Year's Windfalls.
Autumn.	An Apple-Gathering.
Winter : My Secret.	Song.
Autumn Violets.	Maude Clare.
A Dirge.	Echo.
	Another Spring.
	Bird or Beast.

Eve.  
 A Daughter of Eve.  
 A Peal of Bells.  
 The Bourne.  
 Song.  
 Venus's Looking-Glass.  
 Love Lies Bleeding.  
 Bird Raptures.  
 The Queen of Hearts.  
 'No, thank you, John.'  
 Beauty is Vain.  
 May.  
 A Pause of Thought.  
 Twilight Calm.  
 Wife to Husband.  
 Three Seasons.  
 Mirage.  
 A Royal Princess.  
 My Friend.  
 Shut Out.  
 Sound Sleep.  
 Song.  
 Song.  
 Dead before Death.  
 Twilight Night.  
 Bitter for Sweet.  
 What would I give?  
 The First Spring Day.  
 A Bird Song.  
 A Smile and a Sigh.  
 One Day.  
 Rest.  
 The Convent Threshold.  
 Amor Mundi.  
 Up-Hill.  
 'The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the  
   Children.'  
 In the Round Tower at Jhansi.  
 'Thy Brother's Blood crieth.'  
 'To-day for Me.'  
 A Christmas Carol.  
 'The Love of Christ which passeth  
   Knowledge.'  
 'A Bruised Reed shall He not break.'  
 Long Barren.  
 Despised and Rejected.  
 A Better Resurrection.  
 If Only.  
 Advent.  
 The Three Enemies.  
 Consider.

Dost Thou not care?  
 Weary in Well-doing.  
 One Certainty.  
 By the Waters of Babylon.  
 Christian and Jew.  
 Good Friday.  
 Sweet Death.  
 Symbols.  
 'Consider the Lilies of the Field.'  
 The World.  
 A Testimony.  
 Paradise.  
 Sleep at Sea.  
 Mother Country.  
 'I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills.'  
 'The Master is come, and calleth for  
   Thee.'  
 Who shall deliver me?  
 'When my Heart is vexed, I will com-  
   plain.'  
 After Communion.  
 Martyrs' Song.  
 After this the Judgment.  
 Saints and Angels.  
 A Rose Plant in Jericho.  
 From House to Home.  
 Old and New Year Ditties.  
 Amen.  
 The Lowest Place.

## THE SECOND SERIES

The Key-Note.  
 The Months : A Pageant.  
 Pastime.  
 'Italia, io ti saluto !'  
 Mirrors of Life and Death.  
 Birchington Churchyard.  
 A Ballad of Boding.  
 Yet a little while.  
 He and She.  
 Monna Innominata.  
 'Luscious and Sorrowful.'  
 One Sea-side Grave.  
 De Profundis.  
 Tempus Fugit.  
 Golden Glories.  
 Johnny.  
 Brother Bruin.  
 'Hollow-sounding and Mysterious.'

A Helpmeet for him.  
 Maiden May.  
 Till To-morrow.  
 Death-Watches.  
 Touching 'Never.'  
 Brandons both.  
 A Life's Parallels.  
 At Last.  
 Golden Silences.  
 In the Willow Shade.  
 Fluttered Wings.  
 A Fisher-Wife.  
 What's in a Name?  
 Mariana.  
 Memento Mori.  
 'One Foot on Sea, and one on Shore.'  
 A Song of Flight.  
 Buds and Babies.  
 A Wintry Sonnet.  
 Boy Johnny.  
 Freaks of Fashion.  
 An October Garden.  
 'Summer is ended.'  
 Passing and Glassing.  
 'I will arise.'  
 Resurgam.  
 A Prodigal Son.  
 Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde.

To-day's Burden.  
 An 'immurata' Sister.  
 'There is a budding Morrow in Mid-  
 night.'  
 'If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not.'  
 The Thread of Life.  
 An Old-World Thicket.  
 Exultate Deo.  
 'All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord.'  
 Later Life.  
 'For Thine own Sake, O my God.'  
 Until the Day Break.  
 A Hope Carol.  
 'Of him that was ready to perish.'  
 Christmas Carols.  
 A Candlemas Dialogue.  
 'Behold the Man!'  
 The Descent from the Cross.  
 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.  
 'It is Finished.'  
 An Easter Carol.  
 'Behold a shaking.'  
 All Saints.  
 'Take care of Him.'  
 Patience of Hope.  
 A Martyr.  
 Why?  
 'Love is strong as Death.'

B.—POEMS BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, EXTANT IN MS.  
 (A FEW IN PRINT ALSO), BUT NOT USED IN THE  
 PRESENT EDITION, NOR IN THE NEW POEMS PRINTED  
 IN 1896.

	<i>Date.</i>
1. Heaven . . . . .	1842
2. Corydon's Lament and Resolution . . . . .	1843
3. Rosalind . . . . .	"
4. The Water-spirit's Song (an extract from this appears in Mr. Mac- kenzie Bell's book) . . . . .	1844
5. Pitia a Damone . . . . .	"
6. The Faithless Shepherdess . . . . .	"
7. Ariadne to Theseus . . . . .	"
8. A Hymn for Christmas Day . . . . .	"
9. Love and Death . . . . .	"
10. Despair . . . . .	"
11. Easter Morning . . . . .	"
12. Song (The faith of years is broken) . . . . .	"

	<i>Date.</i>
13. A Tirsi . . . . .	1845
14. The Last Words of St. Telemachus . . . . .	"
15. Lord Thomas and Fair Margaret . . . . .	"
16. Charade [on the word 'Sonnet'] . . . . .	"
17. Hope in Grief . . . . .	"
18. The Rose . . . . .	1846
19. On Lady Isabella . . . . .	"
20. Divine and Human Pleading . . . . .	"
21. The Ruined Cross . . . . .	"
22. Amore e Dispetto . . . . .	"
23. Sappho . . . . .	"
24. Song (I saw her, she was lovely) . . . . .	"
25. The Last Words of Sir Eustace Grey . . . . .	"
26. Eva . . . . .	"
27. Young men aye were fickle found . . . . .	1847
28. A Counsel . . . . .	"
29. One of the Dead . . . . .	"
30. The Trees' Counselling . . . . .	"
31. O Death, where is thy Sting . . . . .	1847 or 1848
32. Peter the Hermit's Benediction . . . . .	"
33. Undine . . . . .	1848
34. Floral Teaching . . . . .	"
35. Death . . . . .	"
36. Nydia . . . . .	"
37. Ellen Middleton . . . . .	"
38. St. Andrew's Church . . . . .	"
39. Grown Cold . . . . .	"
40. Zara (The pale sad face of her I wronged) . . . . .	"
41. Sleep, sleep . . . . .	"
42. What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her . . . . .	"
43. Ten Bouts-rimés Sonnets . . . . .	1848-49

They begin with the following lines:— (1) Listen, and I will tell you of a face; (2) Strange voices sing among the planets which; (3) From early dawn until the flush of noon; (4) Surely there is an aching void within; (5) The spring is come again, not as at first; (6) You who look on past ages as a glass; (7) Who shall my wandering thoughts steady and fix; (8) Along the highroad the way is too long; (9) O thou who tell'st me that all hope is over; (10) O glorious sea that in each climbing wave.

44. Sonnet (Some say that love and joy are one, and so) . . . . .	1849
45. The Last Complaint . . . . .	"
46. Have you Forgotten? . . . . .	"
47. A Year Afterwards . . . . .	"
48. Charade (On the name Ægisthus) . . . . .	"
49. A Dream (Oh for my love, my only love) . . . . .	1851
50. Song (I have loved you for long long years, Ellen) . . . . .	1852
51. Let them rejoice in their Beds . . . . .	1853
52. Like as we are (MS. incomplete) . . . . .	"
53. All night I dream you love me well . . . . .	"

	<i>Date.</i>
54. Epitaph . . . . .	1853
55. Our Heaven . . . . .	1854
56. Guesses . . . . .	"
57. Zara (I dreamed that loving me he would love on) . . . . .	1855
58. An Answer (MS. incomplete) . . . . .	1856
59. The Massacre of Perugia (MS. incomplete). . . . .	1859
60. Verses on a Picnic near Sunderland . . . . .	"
61. Verses to W. B. Scott (dos-à-dos) . . . . .	1866

## C.—SOME LEADING THEMES, OR KEY-NOTES OF FEELING, IN THE POEMS OF CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

1. *Personal Experiences and Emotions.*—From House to Home—A Pageant (p. 54)—Monna Innominata—An Old-World Thicket (p. 65)—Later Life, Nos. 4, 12, 17, 21, 22, 27—Lines to my Grandfather—Wishes—I do set my Bow in the Cloud—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Two Pursuits—Afterward he repented, and went—Can I know it? Nay—Doeth well, . . . doeth better—Balm in Gilead—Thou knewest, thou oughtest therefore—Bury Hope out of sight—A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope—Old and New Year Ditties—A Better Resurrection—The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness (when all the over-work of life)—Our mothers, lovely women pitiful—For Henrietta Polydore—Ash-Wednesday (Jesus, do I love Thee?)—The offering of the New Law—For a Mercy received—Come unto Me—Who shall deliver me?—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Weigh all my Faults and Follies righteously—Lord, grant me grace to love Thee in my pain—Lord, make me one with thine own faithful ones—Three Stages—Looking Forward—Shut out—Down-cast—Introspective—Memory—L. E. L.—Twilight Night—What would I give—A Sketch—Shall I forget?—En Route—Italia io ti Saluto—An Immurata Sister—By Way of Remembrance—Cor Mio (Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts)—Meeting (I said good-bye in hope)—They desire a Better Country (I would not if I could undo my past)—Confluents—Valentines to my Mother—Parted—The Key-note—Yet a Little While (I dreamed and did not seek : to-day I seek)—One Seaside Grave—My Mouse—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente.

2. *Death.*—Later Life, Nos. 26, 27—The Dead Bride—Night and Death—Song (The stream moaneth as it floweth)—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Sweet Death—Laughing Life cries at the Feast—Sooner or later, yet at last—God is our Hope and Strength—Song (When I am dead, my dearest)—Dream Land—After Death—Rest—Looking Forward—Life Hidden—Remember—Sound Sleep—Two Thoughts of Death—A Pause—Long looked for—The Last Look—A Peal of Bells—My Friend—At Home—Yet a Little While—Better so—Life and Death—Songs in a Cornfield (p. 370)—An Immurata Sister—Of my Life—Days of Vanity—Mirrors of Life and Death.

3. *The Aspiration for Rest.*—The Lotus-eaters—Sonnet from the Psalms—There remaineth therefore a Rest (In the grave will be no space)—There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God (Rest remains when all is done)—A Burden—In Patience—Weary in Well-doing—All Saints, Martyrs—Love loveth thee and Wisdom loveth thee—Three Stages, No. 3—Dream Land—Rest—Sound Sleep—From the Antique (The wind shall lull us yet)—Yet a Little While—To-day's Burden—Sleeping at Last—What will it be?

4. *Vanity of Vanities*.—The Lowest Room (p. 19)—One Certainty—A Testimony—Vanity of Vanities (Of all the downfalls in the world)—Sleep at Sea—Mother Country—Saints and Angels—If thou sayest, Behold we knew it not, No. 3—A Vain Shadow—Vanity of Vanities (Ah! woe is me for pleasure that is vain)—Maiden May—Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente, No. 20.

5. *Love of Animals*.—Goblin Market (p. 2)—From House to Home (p. 21)—A Pageant (pp. 48 to 50)—An Old-World Thicket—All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord (p. 71)—Later Life, No. 20—These all wait upon Thee—Twilight Calm—To what purpose is this Waste?—My Dream (Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night)—The Lambs of Grasmere—A Chill—Summer (Winter is cold-hearted)—Bird or Beast—Eve—A Green Cornfield—Bird Raptures—Valentines to my Mother, 1885—Mirrors of Life and Death—Freaks of Fashion—A Frog's Fate—Brother Bruin—Child's Talk in April—Winter (Sweet blackbird is silenced with chaffinch and thrush)—Minnie and Mattie—Hopping Frog, hop here and be seen—When the Cows come home the milk is coming—Hurt no Living Thing—A poor old Dog—Mole and Earthworm.

6. *Winter*.—Later Life, No. 19—Bitter for Sweet—Seasons (In Springtime when the leaves are young)—Seasons (Crocuses and snowdrops wither)—Winter Rain—Seasons (Oh the cheerful budding-time)—A Year's Windfalls—What's in a name?—There is a budding morrow in Midnight—Winter (Sweet blackbird, etc.).

7. *The Loveliness of the Rose*.—Three Nuns (p. 15)—Gone for ever—The Solitary Rose—As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Have Patience—Queen Rose—Three Moments—A Year's Windfalls—Maiden May—Brandons both—An October Garden—Summer is Ended—To my Fior-di-Lisa—Hope is like a Harebell trembling from its Birth—The Lily has a smooth Stalk.

## MEMOIR

GABRIELE ROSSETTI and his wife Frances Mary Lavinia (Polidori), marrying in April 1826, had four children. They were: Maria Francesca, born 17 February 1827; Gabriel Charles Dante (better known as Dante Gabriel), 12 May 1828; William Michael, 25 September 1829; and Christina Georgina, 5 December 1830. These were all born at No. 38, Charlotte Street, Portland Place, London. Christina, like the other children, was baptized in the Church of England. Her two godmothers were Lady Dudley Stuart, originally the Princess Christine Bonaparte, a daughter of Lucian, and of course niece of the great Napoleon—Rossetti being well known to several members of this world-famous family; and Miss Georgina Macgregor, a daughter of Sir Patrick Macgregor, and pupil of Mrs. Rossetti, who had before marriage been a governess in that house.

In my Memoir of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, published along with his *Family Letters* in 1895, I have given various particulars about our father Gabriele Rossetti, and a few about our mother. I shall not repeat them here, beyond what is necessary for my immediate purpose. Gabriele Rossetti was a native of Vasto in the Abruzzi, kingdom of Naples, born February 1783. His origin was quite undistinguished, his father being a blacksmith and locksmith, and his maternal grandfather a shoemaker; he had however, I believe, some hereditary connection with a family of more position, named Della Guardia, and either in the Rossetti or in the Della Guardia line of a previous period there had been some sort of local literary note. Gabriele Rossetti showed an early aptitude for drawing, and also for verse. He went towards 1803 to Naples, and held for a short time the official post of librettist to the Operatic Theatre of San Carlo, and for a much longer term that of custodian of Ancient Bronzes in the Naples Museum. He published in Naples some of his poetical compositions, but was more especially known and admired as an improvisatore. In 1820 he adhered to the movement, started by a military uprising, for obtaining a Constitution for the kingdom of Naples. The Bourbon king, Ferdinand I., granted and swore to the Constitution; and then rapidly revoked it, and treated its promoters as criminals. In the summer of 1821 Rossetti had



to escape from Naples in disguise; sojourned for a while in Malta; and early in 1824 came over to London. He married the second daughter of Gaetano Polidori; he being at the time forty-three years of age, and she much younger, barely twenty-six. Polidori had, in his youth, been secretary to the celebrated dramatic poet Alfieri; he was a teacher of Italian in London, and author of many books, and had been the father of Dr. John Polidori, who became Byron's travelling physician in 1816, made some name as author of *The Vampyre*, and committed suicide in 1821.

In London Gabriele Rossetti (having no private means of subsistence whatever, and his wife nothing in hand, and only a modest contingent expectation) followed the same career as his father-in-law—that of teaching Italian. He was appointed Professor of Italian in King's College, London, in 1831; but this added little to his occupations, and next to nothing to his income. He published several books, both verse and prose. The verse procured him very considerable celebrity in Italy as a patriotic poet; the prose—largely concerned with the interpretation of Dante and other mediæval writers as being members of a secret school of daring speculators in politics and religion—was prohibited in Italy (and so indeed was the verse), but made a good deal of stir in England, earning some few partizans here and there, and a fair number of adversaries. Rossetti did not naturalize himself as an Englishman, but remained an Italian, and a highly patriotic Italian; neither did he protestantize, though in open and frequently published opposition to the papal system and pretensions.

Such was the household into which Christina Rossetti was born; a household of narrow means, according to the English standard of income and living (I suppose the years were very few in which Rossetti made, from all sources, more than an annual £300, and it must generally have been less); of no display and no inclination for display; of careful but not stingy economy—the father being highly inexpensive in all personal habits, and the mother an assiduous housewife from day to day and from year to year; of infallibly upright dealing and no indebtedness; of substantial but not self-indulgent comfort; of steady continuous occupation; of a high standard of right; of serious thinking and many intellectual interests—few of any other sort. These brief words of attestation are no more than my due to my parents; to point out the defects of my father, or to discover some in my mother, is not incumbent upon me, nor indeed is there anything of this kind which needs to be stated as relevant to the home-life of Christina Rossetti. I should add that Mrs. Rossetti (who was of wholly English extraction on her mother's side, as of wholly Italian extraction on her father's) was born and bred in London, and was of a decidedly English rather than Italian type of person and character; her education was good, her mind fully formed. The mutual affection and esteem of husband and wife were solid and unvarying; there was little dissent between them—except indeed an abstract dissent on subjects of religion—and quarrelling

and nagging were unknown. Rossetti was mainly a free-thinker, although much in sympathy with the moral and spiritual teachings of the Gospel; his wife was a devout but not a sanctimonious member of the Church of England—the dominant tone of which was, towards the date of Christina's birth, the 'evangelical,' the 'high church' being as yet dormant.

Christina, as being the youngest of the four children, could not fail to be influenced to some extent, in her earliest years, by the qualities of her sister and brothers, as well as of her parents. Maria was mentally a precocious child, learning very early and easily all such matters as reading, writing, speaking two languages, etc.; indeed she was from first to last much the best of the four at all matters of acquired knowledge of that sort. She was of an upright and affectionate, but naturally a rather jealous, disposition, and of enthusiastic temperament; plunging with great ardour, before reaching the age of twelve or eleven, into such themes as the career of Napoleon, the Iliad, Grecian mythology, etc. From her earliest years she was devout; and, after being confirmed (towards 1840), she made religion her paramount concern, attending little in comparison to anything else. The character of Gabriel is perhaps pretty well understood by readers at the present day. In childhood as in manhood he was ardent, impulsive, dominant, generous, good-natured; not unfrequently passionate; determined to be a painter; eagerly susceptible to anything of a poetic, imaginative, or fanciful kind, but not to what partook of abstract or scientific knowledge. Of myself I will say nothing, except that I was a somewhat demure little boy, not quarrelsome and not teasing, and, as nearest to Christina in age, was regarded by her as a kind of ally against the thews, sinews, and dictation (such as they were), of our two very juvenile seniors.

The earliest years of a child's life are doubtless of great consequence in forming lines of character which afterwards deepen; but those very earliest years do not remain clear to the consciousness of the adult. Let us then, ignoring those first years, imagine Christina Rossetti at the age of five years completed, or about as far back as she would plainly remember in after life, and define a little of what she saw around her. It is the beginning of the year 1836, in which the family moved from No. 38 Charlotte Street to No. 50, a rather larger house, but still a small one. The father is now no less than fifty-three years old, the mother thirty-six.

The Rossetti household was thoroughly unconventional, living plainly and comfortably within their own walls, and being very little visible to outsiders. No Rossetti, and also no Polidori, had any idea of 'keeping in the fashion'; one or other of them (but this does not rightly apply to my mother) would have been found in 1860 dressing in very much the same mode as in 1835. Hence a kind of family tradition, which to some extent—though it was but a very minor extent in comparison—clung to Christina in her adult years. Our father was either occupied out-of-doors teaching, or was indoors writing about Dante, Freemasonry, and other light topics.

He was kind in his family, open-hearted, very animated in mind and manner, and on the whole cheerful, in spite of the bitterness of exile and the wrestle with fortune. The mother went out into society hardly at all, being wholly devoted to her domestic duties, with husband and four young children. The education of her two daughters was, from first to last, entirely her work—allowing for some trifles, such as singing and dancing lessons, and these had no appreciable sequel. There was nothing of the ascetic about her, nor yet any disregard for the social proprieties, as ordinarily accepted and applied: but an extreme indifference to ‘showing off,’ or putting herself forward in any way whatever, and a perfect willingness to forego all sorts of diversions and social distractions; her duties, her requisite occupations, and the cultivation of her mind by miscellaneous readings in three languages, sufficed her. The children were constantly with their parents; there was no separate nursery, and no rigid line drawn between the big ones and the little ones. Of English society there was extremely little—barely one or two families that we saw something of at moderate intervals; but of Italian society—in the sense of Italians who hunted up and haunted our father as an old acquaintance or a celebrity—the stream was constant and copious. Singular personages these Italians (with occasionally some foreigner of a different nationality) were, in many instances; almost all of them eager after something—few or none eager after those things which occupy the thoughts of the average Englishman—to increase his income, to rise a grade higher in social position, to set his children going in one of the approved grooves, to relax over the sporting columns of a newspaper. There were exiles, patriots, politicians, literary men, musicians, and some of inferior standing; fleshy good-natured Neapolitans, keen Tuscans, emphatic Romans. As we children were habituated from our earliest years to speaking Italian with our father, we were able to follow all or most of the speech of these ‘natives’; and a conspirator or a semi-brigand might present himself, and open out on his topics of predilection, without our being told to leave the room. All this—even apart from our chiefly Italian blood—made us, no doubt, not a little different from British children in habit of thought and standard of association; and, when Dante and Christina Rossetti proved, as poetic writers, somewhat devious from the British tradition and the insular mind, we may say, if not ‘so much the better,’ at any rate, ‘no wonder.’

Apart from her sister and brothers, Christina had no relatives of nearly her own age. She received plenty of affection from her maternal grandparents and maiden aunts. Most of this branch of the family lived in those years in the country—at Holmer Green, near Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. Through staying there from time to time Christina came to know something, and to love much, of rural appearances—gardens, poultry, ponds, frogs, etc.; but this came to an end in 1839, when the Polidoris removed back into London, and from that time onward her experiences of

anything countrified were decidedly sparse and scanty. Our father never took his family out of town for annual jaunts, as for instance to the seaside; there was little money to spend on any such relaxations, and not much disposition to be on the move. Later on (as may readily be guessed) Christina visited several of the ordinary seaside or other resorts: Brighton, Hastings, Clifton, Cheltenham, Sevenoaks, Torquay, etc.; she was a little in Scotland, never in Ireland. In childhood she was of a lively, and a somewhat capricious or even fractious, temper; but she was warm-natured, engaging, and a general favourite, considerably prettier than her elder sister Maria. She was by far the least bookish of the family—liking a few things heartily, such as *The Arabian Nights* and the lyric dramas of Metastasio, but generally not applying herself with assiduity to either her books or her studies. She ‘picked up’ things rather than acquired them.

I will give here three small anecdotes of Christina’s childhood. They may be ‘puerile’ or ‘silly,’ yet are characteristic in their way, and have a kind of bearing upon her faculty as a writer. It appears to me that at the dates of the first two incidents my own age was still under seven, so Christina’s was under six: in the third instance she may have been between seven and eight.

1. One day Mrs. Cipriani Potter (the wife of the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, who was my godfather) called upon my mother. Christina was in the room, and our household tabby cat, who, being of mature age, wore that aspect of self-collected gravity with which we are all familiar. Christina made the remark, ‘The cat looks very sedate,’ and I can still remember the glance of amused surprise with which Mrs. Potter greeted the use, by such infantine lips, of such a ‘dictionary-word,’ so appositely introduced. 2. It appears to me that the very first verses composed and spoken by Christina (she was too young to *write* them) were these—they do not profess to be rhyme, but are metre, and correct metre:—

Cecilia never went to school  
Without her gladiator.

There was no reason for coupling ‘gladiator’ with ‘Cecilia.’ The Christian name had been found, I fancy, in a book which we then often skimmed, named *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*, and something or other about gladiators had recently been heard by Christina, and the word (if nothing else) had hit her fancy. She understood this much—that a ‘gladiator’ would be a man capable of showing some fight for ‘Cecilia’ upon an emergency. Unmeaning as the lines and the association are, they are not without hinting at a certain oddity or whimsicality of combination which (mingled indeed with qualities of a very different kind) can be not unfrequently traced in the verse of her mature years. 3. Possibly the earliest thing which Christina wrote (or rather, I think, got some one to write from



her dictation) was the beginning of a tale called perhaps *The Dervise*, on the model (more or less, *i.e.* very little) of *The Arabian Nights*. The dervise, I think, went down into a cavern, where he was to meet with some adventures not much less surprising than those of Aladdin. In the thick of the plot it occurred to Christina that she had not yet given her dervise a name, so she interjected a sentence, 'The Dervise's name was Hassan,' and continued his perilous performances. This outraged the literary sense of Gabriel and the rest of us. I doubt whether, after *The Dervise*, Christina wrote anything else prior to 1840, the date of *Retribution*, which I have briefly mentioned in my Memoir of Dante Rossetti. This also must have been an oriental—I suppose a crusading—prose tale, as one incident was 'Sir Guy finding the letter of Ali.'

I do not seem to know of any other writing by my sister until we come to the date, 27 April 1842, of her first written verses, 'To my Mother.' These were soon privately printed by our grandfather Polidori. They open—in the spirit of filial love which was hers through life—her career as a poetess. From that point onward the present volume furnishes ample material for judging what she was like in heart, mind, feeling, aspiration, faculty, and executive gift; and I may leave that matter to speak for itself.

Christina was, I think, a tolerably healthy girl in mere childhood; but this state of things soon came to an end. She was not fully fifteen when her constitution became obviously delicate. She always received excellent medical advice, and was treated at different times for a variety of maladies. There was angina pectoris (actual or supposed), of which, after some long while, she seemed cured; then cough, with symptoms which were accounted ominous of decline or consumption, lasting on towards 1867; then exophthalmic bronchocele (or Dr. Graves's disease), which began in 1871, and was truly most formidable and prostrating, and which, after destroying for a while all her good looks, left her with permanent cardiac troubles, and an aspect, not indeed anything like so bad as it had been in the thick of the disease, but still sensibly altered. And yet she survived every single member of the Rossetti and Polidori families, myself and my children alone excepted. All these maladies were apart from her last and mortal illness, of which I must say a few words in its place. I have naturally much more reluctance than inclination to dwell upon any of these physical ills; but any one who did not understand that Christina was an almost constant and often a sadly-smitten invalid, seeing at times the countenance of Death very close to her own, would form an extremely incorrect notion of her corporal, and thus in some sense of her spiritual, condition. She was compelled, even if not naturally disposed, to regard this world as a 'valley of the shadow of death,' and to make near acquaintance with promises, and also with threatenings, applicable to a different world. As an invalid she had courage, patience, and even cheerfulness. I have heard her dwell upon the satisfaction—such as it is—of being ill, and interdicted from active exertion and the following-out of

one's fancies. Perhaps the least unhealthy years of her womanhood were towards 1861, and again from 1867 to 1870—age thirty, going on to thirty-nine.

The fortunes of the Rossetti family, always mediocre enough, were at a low ebb from 1842 to 1854. Ill-health and partial blindness overtook our father, leading to the diminution, and ultimately the loss, of professional employment. The sustenance of the household devolved to some extent upon our mother, who went out teaching. Maria was a governess—at first a resident governess, but afterwards attending to pupils from her home. Dante Gabriel, until 1848, could earn nothing, and for some ensuing years very little, and the expenses of starting him in his pictorial vocation were not inconsiderable. For myself, I became an extra clerk in the Excise (or Inland Revenue) Office from 1845, earning a very moderate stipend, which gradually increased; and from 1850 I got some amount of paid literary employment as well. Christina, though she had no propensity to educational or other drudgery, was always most willing to do what might offer. In 1851-52 she assisted our mother in a small day-school at No. 38 Arlington Street, Mornington Crescent. This was far from prosperous, and in 1853 they two, along with our father, moved off to Frome-Selwood, Somerset, in hopes that another day-school might work better. This also proved a comparative failure; and early in 1854 I found myself sufficiently floated to allow of our all living again together in London—all, that is, except Dante Gabriel, who by this time had separate chambers of his own. We reunited in Upper Albany Street—the house now called No. 166 Albany Street; and from this time forward Christina simply lived at home—no longer under the necessity of teaching the small daughters of the neighbouring hairdresser or the neighbouring pork-butcher their p's and q's, but anxious to secure any literary pickings which might offer, and producing poems which the world has not as yet been willing to let die. Her earnings were decidedly meagre. I suppose that from 1854 to 1862 she seldom made £10 in a year; from 1862 to 1890 there might be (taking one year with another) an average of perhaps £40 per annum—less rather than more. By 1890 her poetic reputation was fully settled, and her profits were substantial, without being at all large. Of private income she had, so far as I remember, absolutely none up to 1867, and for many years after that a mere pittance. But, of course, she lived in comfort and security as a member of the family along with other members.

The family had scarcely got reunited in Albany Street when Gabriele Rossetti died, 26 April 1854.

I must now go back a little in date, and give some slight account of an 'affair of the heart' which brightened and darkened the life of Christina Rossetti.<sup>1</sup> There were two such incidents, at an interval of years. The

<sup>1</sup> Readers of her poems had not failed to see, and to say, that some such affair or affairs must have given rise to several of the compositions: but nothing distinct had been

first began in 1848, before she was aged eighteen, and ended in 1850, or possibly late in 1849. The second must have commenced<sup>1</sup> towards the close of 1862; except as a matter of feeling, it terminated towards the opening of 1867.

James Collinson was a painter, who fell in love with Christina soon after being introduced to her. He was chiefly a domestic painter, and had been enrolled in the 'Præraphaelite Brotherhood,' formed towards September 1848. He had originally been a member of the Church of England, and a devout one; but, before making acquaintance with Christina, he had been converted to Roman Catholicism. On explaining his feelings, he was informed that this difference in church-faith formed an obstacle not to be got over. From this fact it might appear that Christina—who already belonged to what was then called the Puseyite or Tractarian party in the English Church, or (as we should now say) the High Church party or Anglo-Catholics—was decidedly hostile to Roman Catholicism. I do not, however, think she was that. I consider that she held then—as she certainly did in later years—that the Roman Catholics are authentic members of the one veritable Church of Christ, but in some matters erroneous; she was, for instance, firmly opposed to anything savouring of Mariolatry. I do not see that her religious tenets were such as to make marriage with a Roman Catholic, in itself, distasteful to her, or contrary to her sense of duty: she may rather perhaps have been influenced by the consideration that, in the event of giving birth to children, she would be at odds with her husband as to the faith in which these should be brought up, with consequences which might expose their souls to peril and scathe. Anyhow she declined Collinson's offer, although, on general grounds, very well disposed towards him. Collinson then seems to have supposed that, after all, his religious convictions were not incompatible with membership in the English Church: he reverted to it, proposed to Christina again, and was accepted. But after a moderate while he found once more that his conscience pricked him, and he must at all hazards be a Roman Catholic. Such he re-became, and Christina (whose force of will, especially where any point of duty seemed to be concerned, was in full proportion to the family motto, *Frangas non flectas*) cancelled the engagement. I will not harshly condemn James Collinson for these successive tergiversations: he was a right-meaning man, of timorous conscience. But he had none the less struck a staggering blow at Christina Rossetti's peace of mind on the very threshold of womanly life, and a blow from which she did not fully recover for years. He died in 1881.

printed on the subject, prior to a note which I inserted in the volume *New Poems*, 1896. In that note I indicated the main facts very briefly, not giving names. It appears to me that there is now no serious reason for withholding the names. I therefore state them, along with the other particulars.

<sup>1</sup> See the series of Italian compositions, *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*.



I must next deal with a personage of higher type, Charles Bagot Cayley, a man of letters and an author, but less author than scholar. Christina may first have known him as far back as 1847 or so, and again in 1854: but the two did not meet much until some such date as 1860. Towards 1847 he had been a pupil of my father for Italian; and he became an excellent Italian scholar (indeed a remarkable linguist generally), and produced a most able translation of Dante's *Comedia* in the original metre. He was a singularly unworldly person, which was no doubt in my sister's eyes a merit, and not a blemish. His precise religious opinions are not clear to me: he had been brought up in the Church of England. I suppose that, like so many other men of inquiring mind, he regarded all religions as much the same thing—a mixture of feeling with thought, and also with assumption and legend, not with verification. He may have considered Christianity the best of all religions, but not as being on a different plane from others, absolute truth as contrasted with fallacy. In course of time he proposed to Christina. She loved him deeply and permanently, but, on his declaring himself, she must no doubt have probed his faith, and found it either strictly wrong or woefully defective. So she declined his suit, but without ceasing to see and to cherish him as a friend. Knowing the state of her heart when the proposal was made, I urged her to marry, and offered that they should both, if money difficulties stood in the way, share my home. But she had made up her mind on grounds which she recognized as higher than any considerations of either feeling or expediency, and she remained immovable. Years passed: she became an elderly and an old woman, and she loved the scholarly recluse to the last day of his life, 5 December 1883, and, to the last day of her own, his memory.

It may be added that Christina was extremely reticent in all matters in which her affections were deeply engaged. Of these two cases I knew a good deal directly, and could indirectly judge of much more; but it would have been both indelicate and futile to press her with inquiries, and of several details in the second case—though important to a close understanding of it—I never was cognizant.

As Mr. Cayley was so important a personage in the hushed life-drama of Christina Rossetti, I will here insert a portion of the obituary notice of him which I wrote, and which was printed in *The Athenæum*:—‘Mr. Charles Bagot Cayley, B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, died suddenly, and apparently without any serious forewarning, of heart disease, in the night of the 4th-5th December, in his lodging at South Crescent, Bedford Square: he was found dead in the morning, having expired, it would seem, in perfect calm during sleep. This gentleman was the son of a Russia merchant, and younger brother of the celebrated mathematician, the Sadlerian Professor at Cambridge. He was born on 9 July 1823, and had therefore completed his sixtieth year. Several of his early years were passed in

Russia. . . . He published, many years ago, a volume of original poems named *Psyche's Interludes*. Some of the same compositions, with others added, re-appeared lately in a privately printed volume. Mr. Cayley was for many years past an active and valued member of the Philological Society. . . . A more complete specimen than Mr. Charles Cayley of the abstracted scholar in appearance and manner—the scholar who constantly lives an inward and unmaterial life, faintly perceptive of external facts and appearances—could hardly be conceived. He united great sweetness to great simplicity of character, and was not less polite than unworldly. In a small circle of intimates his death leaves a mournful blank: they “will not look upon his like again.”

Apart from these two matters, the life of Christina Rossetti presents hardly any incident. Her life had two motive powers,—religion and affection: hardly a third. And even the religion was far more a thing of the heart than of the mind: she clung to and loved the Christian creed because she loved Jesus Christ. ‘Christ is God’ was her one dominant idea. Faith with her was faith pure and absolute: an entire acceptance of a thing revealed—not a quest for any confirmation or demonstrative proof. There were few things she more disliked than an ‘Evidences of Christianity’: I dare say she never read one, but she must have glanced at one or other sufficiently to know that she disliked it. To learn that something in the Christian faith was credible *because it was reasonable*, or because it rested upon some historic evidence of fact, went against her. Her attitude of mind was: ‘I believe because I am told to believe, and I know that the authority which tells me to believe is the only real authority extant, God.’ To press her—‘How do you know that it is God?’ would have been no use; the ultimate response could only have come to this—‘My faith is faith; it is not evolved out of argumentation, nor does it seek the aid of that.’ If she did not admit of discussion of her own belief, neither did she indulge in any discussion of the belief of others: no one knows this better than myself, with whom the field for debate, had she been minded to it, would have been a very large one. In fact, though enormously strict with herself in matters of religious faith and dogma, she was not intolerant of difference of opinion in others: she met on terms of close or amicable good-will many persons whom she knew to be decided disbelievers, not to speak of earnest and devout Dissenters. The Christian believer has before him two things: one, the promise of ecstatic bliss; the other, the decree of excessive misery. Some believers, perceiving themselves to be undoubted Christians in faith, become serenely or perhaps exuberantly happy in their inner selves: it may be said that Maria Rossetti was of these, for (at any rate in her later years) she felt the firmest confidence of salvation. Not so Christina, who always distrusted herself, and her relation to that standard of Christian duty which she constantly acknowledged and professed. In this regard her tone of mind was mainly

despondent: it was painfully despondent in the last few months of her life, but as to that the physical minor reasons may have been as truly operative as the spiritual major reason. All her life long she felt—or rather she exaggerated—her deficiencies or backslidings: she did not face religion with that courageous yet modest front with which a virtuous woman, who knows something of the world, faces life. Passages can no doubt be found in her writings in which she is more hopeful than abased; in which her ardent aspirations towards heaven so identify her with its bliss that she seems to be almost there, or on the very threshold. These passages are of course perfectly genuine; but they are coupled with an awful sense of unworthiness, shadowed by an awful uncertainty. I will not dwell upon slighter matters—those which constituted her a ‘devotee’ in the ordinary sense—her perpetual church-going and communions, her prayers and fasts, her submission to clerical direction, her oblations, her practice of confession. It should be said that, while she had an intense reverence for the priestly function, she cared next to nothing about hierarchical distinctions: anything which assimilated the clerical order to a ‘learned profession’ forming part of the British constitution left her indifferent, or rather inimical.

I have often thought that Christina’s proper place was in the Roman Catholic Church, yet I never traced any inclination in her to join it, nor did she ever manifest any wish to enter upon the conventual life—I think she held herself unworthy of attempting it. Her satisfaction in remaining a member of the English Church may have been due partly to her deep affection for her mother, who, though gradually conforming to the external practices of the High Church section, was far indeed from wishing to Romanize.

I have said that, along with religion, affection was the motive power of Christina’s life. For all her kith and kin, but for her mother far beyond all the rest, her love was as deep as it was often silent. She was not demonstrative, though of a fondling habit as regards her mother. To the latter it may truly be said that her whole life was devoted: they were seldom severed, even for a few days together. When at last, in 1886, death divided them, she tended her two aged aunts with like assiduity, although it was impossible that her outflow of love towards either of them should have had any similar force and glow. Maria she was truly fond of, and she regarded her latterly as almost a saint; of Dante Gabriel she was, so far as natural predilection goes, still fonder—and I might say the same of myself. It will easily be understood that, much as she saw of *him* after they were both grown up, she saw far more of me, for until 1876 (and allowing for the short interval in 1853-54) she and I were always residing together.

Like her mother, Christina went very little into society; none the less she knew and appreciated several leading personages, whom I will name in the order of date (approximately) when she made acquaintance with them: all the members of the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, Madox Brown

with his family,<sup>1</sup> Coventry Patmore, Professor Masson, Burne-Jones, William Morris, Ruskin (I question whether she saw him more than once), Dodgson, Dr. Garnett, Robert Browning (but, unfortunately, not Mrs. Browning), Swinburne, Jean Ingelow, Gosse, Watts-Dunton, Shields, Hall Caine. Many others could be named—Dr. Adolf Heimann, Canon Burrows, W. Bell Scott, James Hannay, J. R. Clayton, William Allingham, Dr. John Epps, Mrs. Bodichon, John L. Tupper, the Howitts, John Brett, Thomas and John Seddon, Henrietta Rintoul, Arthur Hughes, Adelaide Procter, Alexander Macmillan (her publisher, with whom she always had very amicable relations), William Ralston, Stillman, Anne Gilchrist, Dora Greenwell, Miss Alice Boyd, Mrs. Cameron, the Rev. Orby Shipley, Dr. Littledale, James Smetham, Hueffer, the Rev. Alfred Gurney, Dr. Hake, Prebendary Glendinning Nash (her clergyman in late years), Lady Mount-Temple, William Sharp, Professor Dunstan, Lisa Wilson, Miss Ellen Proctor, Mackenzie Bell. From a perusal of this list the reader will correctly infer that after the death of our father we saw little—next to nothing—of Italian society. There was, however, our cousin Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti, a leader in an Italian Evangelical movement, for whom and his Scottish wife Christina felt a sincere attachment. The physician whom my sister consulted was for many years Sir William Jenner: there were also Dr. Hare, Dr. Crellin, Dr. Wilson Fox, Dr. Stewart, and others; and at the very last Dr. Abbott Anderson.

In company she was quiet, and reserved rather than otherwise, but made every now and then some remark which arrested attention. She was as a fact extremely shy. Most people probably perceived as such; but she preserved a calm and collected demeanour, which may perhaps have imposed upon some of the unwary, and induced them to fancy her distant rather than backward. Upon her reputation as a poetess she never presumed, nor did she ever volunteer an allusion to any of her performances: in a roomful of mediocrities she consented to seem the most mediocre as the most unobtrusive of all.

In a life marked by so few external incidents, such matters as the deaths of relatives and friends count for much: I will mention the leading occurrences of this kind, along with some changes of residence, and the like—all in a very summary form. 1853, death of the Polidoris, grandmother and grandfather. 1854 (as already specified), death of our father, Gabriele Rossetti. Later in the same year Christina wished to join her aunt Eliza Polidori in going out as a nurse to Scutari, in connection with the Crimean War, under the scheme planned out by Miss Nightingale; but she was pronounced to be below the stipulated age, so this did not take effect. 1861, Christina's first foreign trip, with our mother and

<sup>1</sup> To avoid tediousness, I do not mention the family in the several instances; but it may be taken that very generally, when a married person is mentioned, the family also was known to Christina.



myself, to Paris, Rouen, Normandy (especially Coutances), and Jersey. 1862, death of Lizzie Rossetti, the wife of Dante Gabriel. After this loss Dante proposed that the family, amalgamating with him, should seek a new residence. There would have been our mother, all her children, and our somewhat invalided eldest aunt, Margaret Polidori, who as yet occupied separate apartments in my house in Albany Street: she would have continued separate to a like degree. Dante wished also that Mr. Algernon Swinburne should be in the house—for, as he truly said, he himself required some amount of intellectual incitement and diversion beyond what the family could minister to him. To this proposal Christina, with the rest of us, assented; but it was soon set aside, as Dante came to prefer a different arrangement. 1865, Christina's second and last foreign trip, in the same company as before, to North Italy (Como, Pavia, Brescia, Verona, Milan, etc.), going out by the St. Gothard route (no tunnel was then in existence), and returning by the Splügen route, Schaffhausen, Strasbourg, etc. 1867, death of Margaret Polidori, a very diligent religionist and church-goer; and removal of Christina, with our mother, Maria, and myself, to No. 56 Euston Square (now called 5 Endsleigh Gardens), a much more commodious house than any we had previously occupied. 1873, in view of my impending marriage to Lucy, daughter of the painter Ford Madox Brown, Maria resolved to carry at once into execution a project she had long entertained, that of entering the Anglican Sisterhood of All Saints. 1874, my marriage: my mother and Christina continued to reside with us, but they not unfrequently spent a week or two with my mother's two sisters, Charlotte and Eliza Polidori, who (after my wedding and their consequent removal from 56 Euston Square) had taken a house, 12 Bloomsbury Square. Oliver Madox Brown, who was godson to Maria (only son of Ford Madox Brown), died in November; and in the same year Christina's cousin, still under thirty, Henrietta Polydore. 1876, family considerations led to the dividing of our household: my wife and daughter, with myself, remaining in Endsleigh Gardens, while my mother and Christina moved off at Michaelmas to No. 30 Torrington Square. Hardly were they settled there when the illness from which Maria had been suffering for many weeks took a fatal turn, and she died in November. 1882, death of Dante Gabriel at Birchington-on-Sea, 9 April, after several weeks' affectionate nursing by our mother and Christina. 1883, death of my infant son Michael. As his end approached, Christina implored me to allow her to baptize him; to this I raised no objection, and she performed the rite unwitnessed save by a nurse, and I doubt whether any act of her life yielded her more heartfelt satisfaction. 1885, death of our uncle, Henry Polydore, a Roman Catholic. 1886, 8 April, death of our mother, a loss to Christina which I forbear from dwelling upon. 1889, death of Franz Hueffer, the man of letters and musical expert and critic, husband of my wife's half-sister. 1890, death of Charlotte Polidori, aged eighty-seven,

after some years of confinement to her bed, a most amiable good woman, less out-of-the-world than other Polidoris, but not less religious; also death of our friend ever since 1847, William Bell Scott, a man whom Christina viewed with great predilection. When in 1892 his *Autobiographical Notes* were published, containing (as I informed her) several unkind and not too accurate passages about Dante Rossetti, she refused to look at the book, swayed, I think, as much by respect for Scott's memory as for her brother's. 1893, death of Eliza Polidori, aged eighty-three, after an illness still longer than Charlotte's, and more wearing to herself, and to Christina as her constant attendant; also death of Ford Madox Brown. With the decease of Eliza Polidori, her last relative of the elder generation, the income of Christina (which had been tolerable enough since 1886) increased, and henceforward she had more than what sufficed for her very moderate requirements. At all periods of her life she had been 'a cheerful giver,' as far as her means allowed. Until a late date these means allowed but little: when they allowed ten-fold, she gave (I dare say) twenty-fold. 1894, April, death of my beloved wife. This is a long mortuary catalogue; but many other deaths took place afflicting to Christina, few more so than those of her early and unfailing friends—Dr. Adolf Heimann, who had been Professor of German at University College, London; and Canon Burrows of Rochester, who had for many years been the Incumbent of the church—Christ Church, Albany Street—which she frequented from about 1843 to 1867 or later.

The Canon died at an advanced age in a year when Christina's own health and energies were little fitted to bear any strain. She was invited in 1892 to write a biography of him, and would have felt much pleasure in doing so, but she found it imperative to decline. Another project which miscarried, at nearly the same date, was the proposal made by our admirable painter, George F. Watts, the recorder of so many faces of pre eminent men and women, that Christina should sit to him for her portrait. She was worthy to do so, and, spite of her life-long shrinking from any sort of notoriety, was anything but indifferent to the distinction thus offered her; but here again considerations of health and rapidly-ebbing life interposed an insuperable barrier. If any one thinks that Christina Rossetti was not the only loser by the failure of this project, I share his opinion.

It does not seem necessary, in this brief Memoir, to dwell upon any of the other incidents of her life—all in themselves insignificant. It was a life which did not consist of incidents: in few things, external; in all its deeper currents, internal.

I am now approaching the end. To a chronic affection of the heart, with a recurrent sense of suffocation (but this had not of late seemed so formidable as at some earlier periods), were added early in 1892 uneasy but not exactly painful sensations, which required to be explained. Medical

advice being taken, the explanation came: the case was one of cancer—a word which had always been pronounced in the family with a certain shrinking. Christina took the announcement most bravely. In May 1892 an operation of a very severe kind was performed by the distinguished surgeon Mr. Lawson—skilfully and successfully performed. After rallying from the shock to the system, Christina went on with an approach to comparative ease for some months, although it was too clearly foreseen that the malady would return. It did so towards the autumn of 1893: no further operation was then practicable, and only palliatives could be applied. Dropsy of the left arm and hand complicated her other illness. In August 1894 she took finally to her bed, in a calm and resigned mood, but, as the time advanced, with troublous agitation, both of the spirit and of the bodily frame. Not that she was ever abashed by pain, or craven-hearted—far indeed from that; but the terrors of her religion compassed her about, to the overclouding of its radiances. At the close of a week of collapse and semi-consciousness, she died without a struggle, in the act of inarticulate prayer, on the early morning of 29 December 1894—her attached nurse alone being present at the moment.

She was buried in Highgate Cemetery, in the same grave to which had been successively consigned her father, her sister-in-law Lizzie, and her mother. A reredos-painting, as a memorial of her, has been set up by subscription in Christ Church, Woburn Square. The design of it was supplied by an old acquaintance of hers, Sir Edward Burne-Jones; the actual painting is by Mr. T. M. Rooke. It is a very appropriate and fine design,—Christ uttering the words of consecration of the eucharistic elements, and the four Evangelists as recorders of the event.

Christina Rossetti was of an ordinary female middle height—slim in youth, but, in middle and advanced age, often rather over-plump; this had been the tendency of both her parents. Some people thought her extremely like her mother; I myself never saw this strongly—the mother's features were the more regular of the two, but not perhaps the more agreeable in combination. My sister's complexion was dark and uniform—yet much less dark than Maria's—and after early youth her cheeks were colourless. Her hair was a dark brown, with a good deal of gloss; not remarkably plenteous in youth, and only a little altered by age—to the last it was essentially brown, not grey. The same had been the case with her mother. Her eyes were originally a bluish grey (portraits show this); but in adult years they might rather be called a greyish hazel, or a richly hazelled grey, and towards the close they may have told out to most persons as being a warm brown, of dark tint. They were always of full size; and, after the attack of exophthalmic bronchocele which began in 1871, they were over-prominent—even somewhat distressingly so at times, but by no means always. The forehead was ample, the lips not noticeably full, with a firm and also a sensitive expression, the chin rather prolonged and pointed in



girlhood, but this was little or not at all observable later on; the facial contour shapely. Her nose was not far from being straight, but taking a slight outward curve towards the tip. Her hands were delicate; and her figure might be called good, without being remarkably fine. She had a good speaking and reading voice—singing she never attempted, apart from the ordinary congregational singing in church. Indeed, I believe that her speaking voice, though not nearly so rich and impressive as Maria's, was considered in youth uncommonly fine in tone and modulation; in her later years there was a certain degree of strain and fatigue in it, but, to many persons who only knew her in those years, this may hardly have been apparent. Her utterance was clear; her delivery—as indeed her whole aspect and demeanour—marked unmistakably by sincerity, consideration for others, and a modest but not the less definite self-regard. I recollect having once told her jocularly (she was perhaps barely seventeen at the time) that 'she would soon become so polite it would be impossible to live with her.' She was one of the last persons with whom any one would feel inspired to take a liberty, though one might, without any sort of remonstrance, treat her as the least important of womankind.

A question has sometimes been raised as to the amount of good looks with which Christina Rossetti should be credited. She was certainly not what one understands by 'a beauty'; the term handsome did not apply to her, nor yet the term pretty. Neither was she 'a fine woman.' She has sometimes been called 'lovely' in youth; and this is true, if a refined and correct mould of face, along with elevated and deep expression, is loveliness. She was assuredly much nearer to being beautiful than ugly; and this, in my opinion, remained true of her throughout her life, for in advanced years her expression naturally deepened, although the traces left upon her by disease, as well as by time, marred her comeliness. However, there are several portraits of her which can be appealed to to settle the question of her good looks; and, as I can speak of the matter with knowledge, I will give a list of them—they are in my own possession, unless otherwise notified.

1. The earliest portrait is a full-face taken by Filippo Pistrucci (the brother of the celebrated medallist), towards 1837. The best version of this water-colour, which has an agreeable childish look, belongs to my daughter, Signora Agresti, of Rome. It was reproduced in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book; the colour has now faded considerably. W. Bell Scott made an etching of it, and I possess another water-colour nearly similar—perhaps a preliminary study for the head. The hair is of a rather bright warm tint.

2. Pistrucci again tried his hand at Christina's face, towards 1843, water-colour, but made a woful failure; the mouth especially being mis-drawn, with a conceited smirking expression. This head is so bad that, but for its being mounted from of old in the same frame with the heads of

the other three children, I should prefer to destroy it, or at any rate hide it away. It shows that by this date Christina's hair was no longer bright, but decidedly brown.

3. Towards 1846, or possibly 1845, Dante Gabriel made a careful pencil-drawing of the head, profile. It is a good likeness, rather (I think) below the level of Christina's attractiveness at that time. It is also a good drawing, but of course does not display the finer qualities of Dante's art, which developed at a later date. This drawing is reproduced in the volume named *Gabriele Rossetti*, brought out by me in 1901.

4. There is a pretty little pencil-drawing by him, of Christina seated in an easy-chair, in a semi-dozing pose. Her general air is well realized, without any great definition of the face. This I take to be as late as 1847.

5. As a frontispiece to her privately printed volume, *Verses*, of 1847, Dante drew, probably in the same year, a careful profile in pencil. It shows Christina with curls (so does No. 2) and with some thinness of contour. It is certainly like her, but not in the most attractive way.

6. In 1848 Dante painted an oil-head of Christina: it appears to be the first coloured work that he completed. It is a true likeness, and shows a face so well-moulded and agreeable as to be, in a fair sense, beautiful. This head is reproduced in the *Family Letters and Memoir* of my brother which I published in 1895; some defect in the surface of the pigment or the canvas interferes with the success of the reproduction.

7. About contemporary with this—for I know not which was the earlier—comes the pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, purchased by Mr. Sydney Morse soon after Christina's death. This also is a most truthful likeness, and a highly pleasing one—rather more matter-of-fact in expression than the preceding. It appears in Mr. Bell's book and elsewhere.

8. The little pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, published with Christina's tale *Maude* in 1897, seems also to appertain to 1848. It is a nice but slight sketch, with some archness of expression—a quality in which the poetess was by no means deficient. The original now belongs to Mr. Coulson Kernahan.

9. The head of Mary, in the oil-picture of *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* painted by my brother in 1848-49, was studied from Christina, and is a real if not a literal portrait of her, allowing for changed colour in the hair. The picture (now belonging to Lady Jekyll) has been reproduced in various forms.

10. The profile in pencil, by my brother, which appears in the *New Poems*, 1896, exquisitely sweet in contour and expression, may have been done in 1849; as I have said elsewhere, it has something of the air of a study preliminary to No. 13, but not in the same pose.

11. The small oil-portrait by James Collinson, given in Mr. Bell's book. This is a true likeness of Christina: a true but also an ordinary one, done

by an artist whose eye for beauty was not keen, and whose style was stunted. Its date is 1849. In 1901 it figured in the Great Exhibition in Glasgow.

12. Towards the same time my brother did a small pencil half-figure of Christina, in profile. It is not important, but defines her general look well enough.

13. The picture by Dante Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (or *The Annunciation*), in the National British Gallery, 1849-50. The head of the Virgin was studied from Christina; it was however altered from time to time, and more than one person sat for it. I consider that it presents some substantial resemblance to Christina, and that the expression of *her* face more than any other is realized in it; a portrait it is not, and does not affect to be. When first exhibited, 1850, the likeness was more decided than it is now.

14. As shown in the book of Dante Rossetti's *Family Letters*, he drew a reminiscent caricature of Christina in August 1852; she is presented as listening in rapt attention to some verses improvised by a friend. The chief point observable in this caricature is that it gives the 'chin rather [or a good deal] prolonged and pointed,' on which I have before remarked.

15. The engaging pencil-drawing by Dante Rossetti reproduced in Mr. Bell's book—Christina seated and reading—October 1852; this affords an extremely good idea of the composed, orderly look of Christina in day-by-day life: placidly self-withdrawn, as incapable of parade in mental gifts as in toilet—but not incapable of making those gifts apparent when the occasion arose.

16. My brother's pen-and-ink design *Hesterna Rosa* (the property of Mr. F. G. Stephens), represents, with a motto from Sir Henry Taylor's *Philip van Artevelde*, two women in a tent with their paramours, who are playing at dice. One of the women, struck with a pang of remorse at the thought of her lapse from virtue, shades her face with her hand. I think it clear that this face is drawn from Christina, whom it resembles well; it is not from Miss Siddal, and at that date there was no other female head that he habitually drew.

17. In June 1853, when my sister was settled in Frome with our parents, I did a pencil sketch of her, the face being in rather full shadow. It has no pretensions as a work of art, but is not deficient in resemblance. There is also, from my hand, a profile outline, which may be of about the same date, but I think rather later; it preserves something, not only of her features, but of the serene, yet by no means unemotional, sweetness of her look.

18. In and about 1855 a friend, Miss (Henrietta) Rintoul, daughter of the then editor of *The Spectator*, took up photography as a diversion, and she made some photographs of Christina, which seem to be the earliest sun-pictures ever taken of her. Two of these photographs remain. In

both Christina is seated in a little balcony abutting on the leads of the house; alone in one instance—in the other along with myself. Both of these are very good likenesses of my sister; unfortunately, they have faded to a great extent.

19. Two photographs on glass were taken of Christina, along with Maria, in April 1855—three-quarter lengths. They are nearly, but not quite, identical, and both give her face with an air of brightness and animation, and of earnestness as well.

20. A photograph on glass, showing Christina along with our mother and Maria. I think the date may be 1856. This is the only portrait of Christina in which the hair is arranged (as customary in those years) over the ears, and with a plait coming circlet-wise across the head. It is an excellent likeness, attesting, by the irrefutable evidence of the sun, that she was not very far from being beautiful. This photograph is reproduced in the volume *Gabriele Rossetti*.

21. 1857 was the date of the publication of Tennyson's *Poems*, illustrated by Millais, Dante Rossetti, and others. On p. 119 is Rossetti's design of King Arthur in Avalon, 'watched by weeping queens.' The first face here (from the spectator's left) is taken from Christina, but is less like her on the engraved page than in the original drawing; she must also have sat for the profile to the extreme right, which is a very faithful likeness. Millais's design (p. 274) of the young lady (*Locksley Hall*) caught in possession of a love-letter is also not unlike Christina; I will not say, however, that it was done from her, for I cannot remember that, nor do I think it quite probable.

22. Towards 1862, soon after the publication of *Goblin Market*, and some laudatory critiques consequent thereon, Dante Gabriel noticed in *The Times* the critical phrase, 'Miss Rossetti can point to work which could not easily be mended.' By a wilful perversion of its obvious meaning, he knocked off a caricature (pen-and-ink) in which Christina, in a highly 'rampageous' mood, was kicking and pounding away with a hammer at the household clock, glass, and crockery; some bank-notes are in the fire. The caricature amused Christina, who preserved it; since it came into my possession I gave it to Signora Agresti. This is not much more like the poetess in visage than in action, but one can see whom it is meant for.

23. Three carte-de-visite photographs, taken in 1863. These, again, are extremely good, rendering very well the subdued dignity and elegant (though not fashionable) quietude of her aspect. Two of the figures are standing—the third is seated, bonneted.

24. In the autumn of 1863 the Rev. Mr. Dodgson (of *Alice in Wonderland*) attended more than once in my brother's house, 16 Cheyne Walk, and took in the garden photographs of the members of the family

whom he found at hand. One (reproduced in Mr. Bell's book) represents my mother and Christina, half-figures; highly successful, and showing the contour of my sister's face to great advantage. There are also three family-groups, two of them comprising four figures, and the other five. The last is spoiled by splashes. In each of these Christina is capitally characterized; one is a standing figure, giving an intellectual profile, and one a seated figure, with a cheerful and somewhat bantering air.

25. In May 1865 my brother made a very careful pencil-profile of Christina, on a fairly large (not life-size) scale. It is in every respect a highly impressive drawing. It suffers from having been begun at first on too small a piece of paper; the penciling has got rubbed, more especially on the hair, and the joining of the added paper is disagreeably apparent. This formed a frontispiece for the volume compiled by me, *Præraphælite Diaries and Letters*.

26. The best known of all the portraits of Christina is the drawing in coloured chalks, life-size, which Dante Rossetti executed in September 1866; it forms the frontispiece to Mr. Bell's book. This is a beautiful drawing, showing a face very chaste in outline, and distinguished in expression; it would be hard for any likeness to be more exact. I have seen it stated somewhere (and I believe *à propos* of this very drawing) that one cannot trust Rossetti's likenesses, as he always idealized. Few statements could be more untruthful. Certainly he aimed—and he succeeded—at bringing out the beauty and the fine expression of a face, rather than its more commonplace and superficial aspect; but his likenesses are, with casual exceptions, very strict transcripts of the fact. Any one who supposes, for instance, that Mrs. William Morris (whom my brother so constantly drew and painted from 1857 onwards) was not precisely like what he represented her, makes a very great mistake.

27. In the same year, 1866, Christina was a visitor at Penkill Castle, Ayrshire, the seat of Miss (Alice) Boyd. Mr. W. Bell Scott was there at the same time; and, in one of his mural paintings in the Castle, he represented her as a personage (? Minerva) in the Court of Venus, from the poem by James I. of Scotland, *The King's Quair*. I saw this painting many years ago, and I believe that the likeness of Christina is fairly characteristic. It has been reproduced by Scott in an etching and otherwise, but not so as to be recognizable.

28. At some date, which I suppose to be towards 1868, she sat for three photographs, all produced perhaps at one sitting. The best is a carte-de-visite, seated full-length, a profile, in which the face has a very thoughtful and expressive look. It is not a flattering likeness, but truly a valuable one. Another seated half-figure, much larger, has that rather set and blank air which comes over the face of a person expecting to be photographed. The third, only head and shoulders, is the reverse of attractive, but the resemblance is there.



29. It was in May 1877 that two photographs of Christina were taken by the skilled hands of Messrs. Elliott and Fry; these are the only photographs of her which seem to retain currency at the present day. It was no fault of Messrs. Elliott and Fry that neither portrait does her justice. They are both seated three-quarter figures, one of them in full face; this the sitter was accustomed to call 'the idiot,' and indeed it is sufficiently vacant-looking. The other is in profile, reading with lowered eyelids; it counts as the less unsatisfactory of the two. In both instances the eyeballs (from the cause to which I have already referred) are rather unpleasantly prominent.

30. The tinted-chalk head of Christina, along with our mother, now in the National Portrait Gallery, was drawn by Dante Rossetti at Hunter's Forestal, Herne Bay, as he was recovering from an illness in the autumn of 1877. This profile is markedly like a certain aspect of Christina's face which was not exactly unwonted, but still was exceptional; there is a rather inscrutable sphinx-like look about it. Whenever I set eyes upon it, the lines from her poem, *From House to Home*, come into my mind—

Therefore in patience I possess my soul ;//  
Yea therefore as a flint I set my face. //

31. Just about the same date my brother did two other tinted-chalk heads of Christina. In one the head is erect, full-face; in the other, three-quarters view, it is slightly drooped; in each of them she wears the cap which she had assumed before 1877, and which continued to the last to be her habitual wear. The latter drawing has been reproduced ere now; not, I think, the former, but it was shown in the Wolverhampton Art Exhibition of 1902. Both these are fine works of art, and speaking likenesses; the erect head partakes, in a minor degree, of the expression which I have noted under No. 30. Anything more close than the drooped head to the features and the sentiment of my sister's face in her advanced years (she was aged forty-six at the time) cannot well be imagined.

I fully think that after this date Christina never sat for her likeness, whether to the sun or to an artist. It is a pity, for seventeen further years elapsed before her death; and there were periods when her face certainly told to better advantage than in the photographs No. 29. I have had in my hands three or four other slight sketches of her by my brother, which I have given away here and there—all of them belonging to the days of her youth or early maturity. Two of them are in the Public Library of Des Moines, in the State of Iowa (United States).

I have thus specified, under 31 numbers, 45 portraits of Christina Rossetti, from the age of six years to that of forty-six. Those which I have numbered 6, 7, 10, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 31, would afford to any one who sees them a very exact knowledge of what she was like from the age of

seventeen onwards ; and most of the others supplement them to some good purpose.

As yet I have said very little as to my sister's character, except that she was religious and affectionate in an eminent degree. It is time to proceed to some further detail.

In innate character she was vivacious, and open to pleasurable impressions ; and, during her girlhood, one might readily have supposed that she would develop into a woman of expansive heart, fond of society and diversions, and taking a part in them of more than average brilliancy. What came to pass was of course quite the contrary. In this result ill-health and an early blight to the affections told for much ; for much also an exceeding sensitiveness of conscience, acted upon by the strictest conceptions in religion. Of society (as one uses that term to mean fashionable or quasi-fashionable society) she saw nothing ; of amusements practically nothing. She was, I suppose, barely eighteen when she determined never again to enter a theatre, dramatic or operatic ; not perhaps that she considered plays and operas to be in themselves iniquitous, but rather that the moral tone of vocalists, actors, and actresses, is understood to be lax, and it behoves a Christian not to contribute to the encouragement of lax moralists. In all such matters Christina was an Anglo-Catholic, and, among Anglo-Catholics, a Puritan ; and yet she looked without hardness of heart upon any individual who might have lapsed from virtue. As well as theatres, she gave up at an early age the game of chess, of which she was rather fond, and this simply because she thought it made her too eager for a win. Cards however she never relinquished, finding no sort of harm in them ; and, up to the death of our mother, or probably even later, she would take a hand at whist, cribbage, or *bézique*, playing for no stakes whatever.

She had a very strong sense of duty and the most rigid regard for truth, in which indeed she resembled all the members of her maternal stock. That she was affectionate in her family I have already said, and she had, besides, a rather unusual feeling of deference for 'the head of the family,' whoever he might be—my father, Dante Gabriel, and finally myself. This might be accounted rather Italian than English. With several people she was extremely friendly, and no one felt more strongly than she the Christian obligation of being at charity with all men. This she found in the long-run a pleasant duty ; but it had not been exactly in her nature from the first, as she was certainly born with a marked antipathy to anything which savoured of vulgarity or 'bumptiousness,' and with an instinctive disposition to 'hold her head high,' though not to assert herself in express terms. In Christina's character there was great dignity tempered—or rather indeed reinforced—by modesty ; and to this her bearing corresponded faithfully. I have already referred to her having been, and this from an early age, rather punctiliously polite ; and it may be that some persons who knew her



intellectual and literary standing in the eye of the world fancied that there was something of affectation or even of sarcasm in this, which, however, was not so. Her speech was often sprightly, or to some extent witty, as well as still oftener simple, earnest, and grave—never abstract or argumentative. She was replete with the spirit of self-postponement, which passed into self-sacrifice whenever that quality was in demand. Such a spirit is, in fact, the spirit of chivalry, and *noblesse oblige* might have been her motto. Though shy, and even somewhat nervous, she was of unshaken firmness, making up her mind pretty easily in any crisis of her life, and abiding immovable. The narrow path was the only one for her, and a lion in the same path made no difference. With firmness, she knew fortitude also. A small point she was the first to concede; but, as soon as a jot of duty seemed involved in it, tenacity was in the very essence of her being. A marked trait in her character was gratitude, a quality which she inherited from both her parents. For the slightest attention or service she felt obliged; and for anything of a serious kind, deeply and permanently indebted. Although naturally of a rather indolent turn, disinclined to stick to an occupation, and often better pleased to be doing nothing than anything, she acquired habits of much assiduity, and neglected no household or other requirement which she perceived to have a claim upon her; and she was at once frugal and liberal. On self-indulgent luxuries, whether of the table or the toilet or aught else, she spent practically nothing at any period of life.

No precept of the Christian religion was more indelibly impressed upon her mind and her sympathies than ‘Judge not, that ye be not judged.’ She never—not even in thought, so far as thought was under her control—imputed a bad motive to any one; and to hear her talking scandal, or indulging in ill-natured gossip, would have been equally impossible as to see her putting on a pair of knickerbockers, or (as in Dante Gabriel’s caricature afore-mentioned) smashing the furniture. None the less she had a large fund of discernment, and speedily fathomed defects in her acquaintances which she never announced. Another text which she constantly bore in mind is that one is not to do ‘anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended or is made weak.’ I have often thought that this trammelled her to some extent in writing, for she was wont to construe the biblical precepts in a very literal manner; and that she would in some instances have expressed herself with more latitude of thought and word, and to a more valuable effect, but for the fear of saying something which would somehow turn to the detriment of some timorous or dim-minded reader. She certainly felt that to write anything for publication is to incur a great spiritual responsibility.

This introduces us to what I regard as the one serious flaw in a beautiful and admirable character—she was by far over-scrupulous. Scrupulosity may be a virtue: over-scrupulosity is at any rate a semi-virtue, but

it has, to my thinking, the full practical bearings of a defect. It is more befitting for a nunnery than for London streets. It weakens the mind, straitens the temperament and character, chills the impulse and the influence. Over-scrupulosity made Christina Rossetti shut up her mind to almost all things save the Bible, and the admonitions and ministrations of priests. To ponder for herself whether a thing was true or not ceased to be a part of her intellect. The only question was whether or not it conformed to the Bible, as viewed by Anglo-Catholicism. Her temperament and character, naturally warm and free, became 'a fountain sealed.' Not but that affection continued to flow in abundant measure, and the clear line of duty told out all the more apparent from receiving no side-lights. Impulse and *elan* were checked, both in act and in writing, but the most extreme spontaneity in poetic performance always remained. The influence of her work became intense for devout minds of a certain type, and for lovers of poetry in its pure essence; but for a great mass of readers, who might otherwise have been attracted and secured, the material proffered was too uniform and too restricted, and was too seldom concerned with breathing and diurnal actualities—never with rising currents of thought.

I must however guard myself here against being supposed to say, what a great number of critics and readers or half-readers have said before me, that Christina's poetry is 'morbid.' Morbid things are to be found in it—where are they not to be found? and the fact that her feelings and perceptions were coloured by an infirm physical condition has been already stated, and was inevitable. But I cannot acknowledge that, for a person who entertained the belief which Christina really and deeply did entertain—the professed belief of all Christians—there is anything morbid in saying that this present life is far from satisfactory, that death is the avenue to a different life, which will be of eternal duration and may be made of ineffable bliss, and that therefore death is a transition to be rather wished for than shunned. No one would regard as morbid a person who, during this mundane life, should elect to pass from a condition of serious distress into one of extreme and lasting happiness, at the cost of a few minutes of physical pain; and this is a contrast infinitely smaller than that between life on earth and the promised life in heaven. As Christina's faith in these things was of iron solidity, so was her attitude of mind, consequent upon her faith, logical and sound; and to speak of morbidity in relation to it seems a decided misapplication of the term. It is open to any of us not to believe in her premisses, and thus to dissent from her conclusion, but the real morbidity would be to reject her conclusion while we admit her premisses.

I have said elsewhere, but may as well repeat it here, that her habits of composition were entirely of the casual and spontaneous kind, from her earliest to her latest years. If something came into her head which she found suggestive of verse, she put it into verse. It came to her (I take it)

very easily, without her meditating a possible subject, and without her making any great difference in the first from the latest form of the verses which embodied it; but *some* difference, with a view to right and fine detail of execution, she did of course make when needful. If the thing did not present itself before her, as something craving a vesture of verse at her hands, she did not write at all. What she wrote was pretty well known in the family as soon as her impeccably neat manuscript of it appeared in one of her little notebooks; but she did not show it about as an achievement, and still less had she, in the course of her work, invited any hint, counsel, or co-operation.

It may be asked—Did Christina Rossetti consider herself truly a poetess, and a good one? Truly a poetess, most decidedly yes; and, within the range of her subject and thought, and the limits of her executive endeavour, a good one. This did not make her in the least conceited or arrogant as regards herself, nor captious as to the work of others; but it did render her very resolute in setting a line of demarcation between a person who is a poet and another person who is a versifier. Pleadings in *misericordiam* were of no use with her, and she never could see any good reason why one who is not a poet should write in metre.

Christina was well versed in Italian and French; of German she knew some moderate amount; of Latin a mere smattering; Greek not at all. At no period of her life was she a great devourer of books, but the number of them which she had read in the course of her sixty-four years was necessarily considerable. Of science and philosophy she knew nothing, and to history she had no marked inclination; much more bias towards biography. Theology she studied, I think, very little indeed: there was the Bible, of which her knowledge was truly minute and ready, supplemented by the *Confessions* of Augustine and the *Imitation of Christ*. She also knew and liked *Pilgrim's Progress*. I question whether, apart from this one book of Augustine, she ever read any 'Father,' Latin or Greek, or desired to read him. To novel-reading she had no narrow-minded objection. Scott she certainly liked, and in early youth Dickens and Bulwer: Thackeray may have appeared to her too worldly and 'knowing,' but she understood his merits. She never, I think, looked into a book which was known or reputed to be 'improper,' and her acquaintance with French novels must have been extremely limited. Any such author as Rabelais would have been beyond measure repulsive to her—indeed, heartily despised as well as loathed; and Boccaccio, wherever he assimilates to a Rabelaisian side of things, would have shared the same fate. But it is certain to me that she never opened the pages of either. In poetry she was (need I say it?) capable of appreciating whatever is really good; and yet her affections, if not her perceptions, in poetry, were severely restricted. The one poet whom she really gloried in was Dante: next to him perhaps Homer, so far as she could estimate him in one or two English translations.

Tasso entranced her in girlhood, and perhaps retained a firm hold on her afterwards. Among very great authors, none (making allowance for Dante) seemed to appeal to her more than Plato: she read his *Dialogues* over and over again, with ever renewed or augmented zest. For Shakespear her intellectual reverence was of course very deep, but how far she delighted in him may be a different question. In tragedy, in feeling, in insight, in splendour of poetic expression, she must have known him supreme; but all the comic or 'Worldly Wiseman' side of Shakespear—except some bits of simple 'fun,' such as Dogberry and Verges—was certain to be distasteful to her. Humour, in its inner essence, she could enter into; but for any rollicking or cynical or unctuous aspect of humour she had no sort of relish. Sir Toby Belch and Falconbridge would simply repel her, and even Falstaff would find little indulgence and elicit only watery smiles. I say all this not as embodying any express remarks of hers, but because I understand her general habit of mind. Another great thing which she disliked was Milton's *Paradise Lost*: the only poems of his which she seems to me to have seriously loved were the sonnets. Among modern English poets, I should say that Shelley, or perhaps Coleridge, stood highest in her esteem; certainly not Wordsworth, whom she read scantily. As to Shelley, she can have known little beyond his lyrics; most of the long poems, as being 'impious,' remained unscanned. Tennyson she heartily enjoyed and admired, and Mrs. Browning; and Browning she honoured, without eager sympathy. The poems of William Morris were mostly unread by her—not unvalued. Of Swinburne she knew *Atalanta in Calydon*, and some few other things, including (I suppose) *Erechtheus*; and she regarded *Atalanta* as—what it is—a stupendous masterpiece. For one work by a poetess junior to herself she entertained an exceptional admiration—the tragic drama, *The Sentence* (relating to Caligula), by Augusta Webster. It would be possible to extend these remarks much, but here I may pause.

Christina had no politics; unless it be the rule 'Honesty is the best policy,' acting upon a constitution of mind much more conservative than inclined to change. In childhood she had, of course, through the influence and associations of her father, been nurtured in an atmosphere of bold political advance, tending to the revolutionary: this may have lingered with her as a kind of antidotal savour against conservatism, but hardly as a practical counterbalance. I do not think, however, that she ever viewed an Austrian—the bugbear of our early Italian environments—as quite on the same footing as men of other races. The two nations that she really liked, apart from those of the United Kingdom, were the Italians and the French. At the time of the great American war of secession, she was (like myself) a steady adversary of the slave-holders. As in politics, so in the fine arts of form—painting and sculpture—she had little fundamental opinion of her own, and no connoisseurship. She naturally adhered to what was high and noble in the arts, and would not have supposed that

something inane and bad was good ; but she neither possessed nor affected anything approaching to critical judgment in these matters. To music she was not insensitive ; but she was ignorant, and it formed no part of her concern.

As to Christina Rossetti's poetry, I feel that it is my part rather to keep silence than to speak, especially when, as in the present instance, her poems are presented to the public, to be judged of as the public wills. I will however say thus much—that, fully conscious as I am of their limitations, I consider that on some grounds it is hardly possible to over-praise them. Her prose writings partake of the same qualities to a certain extent—of course a minor extent.

As I have given in my Preface a list of the volumes which have hitherto constituted her poems, I think it as well to add here a list of the prose volumes ; and with that I terminate my summary account of a soul as pure, duteous, concentrated, loving, and devoted, as ever uttered itself in either prose or verse.

WILLIAM M. ROSSETTI.

#### LIST OF PROSE WORKS

1. *Commonplace, and other Short Stories*, 1870.
2. *Annus Domini, a Prayer for each Day of the Year*, 1874.
3. *Speaking Likenesses*, 1874.
4. *Seek and Find*, 1879.
5. *Called to be Saints*, 1881.
6. *Letter and Spirit*, 1883.
7. *Time Flies*, 1885.
8. *The Face of the Deep, a Devotional Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 1892.
9. *Maude*, 1897.





## DEDICATORY SONNET

*SONNETS are full of love, and this my tome  
Has many sonnets : so here now shall be  
One sonnet more, a love sonnet, from me  
To her whose heart is my heart's quiet home,  
To my first Love, my Mother, on whose knee  
I learnt love-love that is not troublesome ;  
Whose service is my special dignity,  
And she my lodestar while I go and come.  
And so because you love me, and because  
I love you, Mother, I have woven a wreath  
Of rhymes wherewith to crown your honoured name ;  
In you not fourscore years can dim the flame  
Of love, whose blessed glow transcends the laws  
Of time and change and mortal life and death.*

*April 1880.*



## THE LONGER POEMS

### GOBLIN MARKET

MORNING and evening  
Maids heard the goblins cry :  
'Come buy our orchard fruits,  
Come buy, come buy :  
Apples and quinces,  
Lemons and oranges,  
Plump unpecked cherries,  
Melons and raspberries,  
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,  
Swart-headed mulberries,  
Wild free-born cranberries,  
Crab-apples, dewberries,  
Pine-apples, blackberries,  
Apricots, strawberries ;—  
All ripe together  
In summer weather,—  
Morns that pass by,  
Fair eves that fly ;  
Come buy, come buy :  
Our grapes fresh from the vine,  
Pomegranates full and fine,  
Dates and sharp bullaces,  
Rare pears and greengages,  
Damsons and bilberries,  
Taste them and try :  
Currants and gooseberries,  
Bright-fire-like barberries,  
Figs to fill your mouth,  
Citrons from the South,  
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye ;  
Come buy, come buy.'

Evening by evening  
Among the brookside rushes,  
Laura bowed her head to hear,  
Lizzie veiled her blushes :  
Crouching close together  
In the cooling weather,  
With clasping arms and cautioning  
lips,  
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.  
'Lie close,' Laura said,  
Pricking up her golden head :  
'We must not look at goblin men,  
We must not buy their fruits :  
Who knows upon what soil they fed  
Their hungry thirsty roots ?'  
'Come buy,' call the goblins  
Hobbling down the glen.  
'Oh,' cried Lizzie, 'Laura, Laura,  
You should not peep at goblin men.'  
Lizzie covered up her eyes,  
Covered close lest they should look ;  
Laura reared her glossy head,  
And whispered like the restless brook :  
'Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,  
Down the glen tramp little men.  
One hauls a basket,  
One bears a plate,  
One lugs a golden dish  
Of many pounds' weight.  
How fair the vine must grow  
Whose grapes are so luscious  
How warm the wind must blow  
Through those fruit bushes.'

'No,' said Lizzie : 'No, no, no ;  
 Their offers should not charm us,  
 Their evil gifts would harm us.'  
 She thrust a dimpled finger  
 In each ear, shut eyes and ran :  
 Curious Laura chose to linger  
 Wondering at each merchant man.  
 One had a cat's face,  
 One whisked a tail,  
 One tramped at a rat's pace,  
 One crawled like a snail,  
 One like a wombat prowled obtuse  
 and furry,  
 One like a ratel tumbled hurryscurry.  
 She heard a voice like voice of doves  
 Cooing all together :  
 They sounded kind and full of loves  
 In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck  
 Like a rush-imbedded swan,  
 Like a lily from the beck,  
 Like a moonlit poplar branch,  
 Like a vessel at the launch  
 When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen  
 Turned and trooped the goblin men,  
 With their shrill repeated cry,  
 'Come buy, come buy.'  
 When they reached where Laura was  
 They stood stock still upon the moss,  
 Leering at each other,  
 Brother with queer brother ;  
 Signalling each other,  
 Brother with sly brother.  
 One set his basket down,  
 One reared his plate ;  
 One began to weave a crown  
 Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts  
 brown  
 (Men sell not such in any town) ;  
 One heaved the golden weight  
 Of dish and fruit to offer her :

'Come buy, come buy,' was still  
 their cry.

Laura stared but did not stir,  
 Longed but had no money.  
 The whisk-tailed merchant bade her  
 taste

In tones as smooth as honey,  
 The cat-faced purr'd,  
 The rat-paced spoke a word  
 Of welcome, and the snail-paced  
 even was heard ;  
 One parrot-voiced and jolly  
 Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty  
 Polly' ;  
 One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in  
 haste :

'Good Folk, I have no coin ;  
 To take were to purloin :  
 I have no copper in my purse,  
 I have no silver either,  
 And all my gold is on the furze  
 That shakes in windy weather  
 Above the rusty heather.'  
 'You have much gold upon your  
 head,'

They answered all together :  
 'Buy from us with a golden curl.'  
 She clipped a precious golden lock,  
 She dropped a tear more rare than  
 pearl,  
 Then sucked their fruit globes fair  
 or red.

Sweeter than honey from the rock,  
 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,  
 Clearer than water flowed that juice ;  
 She never tasted such before,  
 How should it cloy with length of  
 use ?

She sucked and sucked and sucked  
 the more  
 Fruits which that unknown orchard  
 bore ;

She sucked until her lips were sore ;  
 Then flung the emptied rinds away  
 But gathered up one kernel stone,  
 And knew not was it night or day  
 As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate  
 Full of wise upbraidings :  
 ' Dear, you should not stay so late,  
 Twilight is not good for maidens ;  
 Should not loiter in the glen  
 In the haunts of goblin men.  
 Do you not remember Jeanie,  
 How she met them in the moonlight,  
 Took their gifts both choice and  
     many,  
 Ate their fruits and wore their  
     flowers  
 Plucked from bowers  
 Where summer ripens at all hours ?  
 But ever in the noonlight  
 She pined and pined away ;  
 Sought them by night and day,  
 Found them no more, but dwindled  
     and grew grey ;  
 Then fell with the first snow,  
 While to this day no grass will grow  
 Where she lies low :  
 I planted daisies there a year ago  
 That never blow.  
 You should not loiter so.'  
 ' Nay, hush,' said Laura :  
 ' Nay, hush, my sister :  
 I ate and ate my fill,  
 Yet my mouth waters still :  
 To-morrow night I will  
 Buy more ;' and kissed her.  
 ' Have done with sorrow ;  
 I'll bring you plums to-morrow  
 Fresh on their mother twigs,  
 Cherries worth getting ;  
 You cannot think what figs  
 My teeth have met in,  
 What melons icy-cold

Piled on a dish of gold  
 Too huge for me to hold,  
 What peaches with a velvet nap,  
 Pellucid grapes without one seed :  
 Odorous indeed must be the mead  
 Whereon they grow, and pure the  
     wave they drink  
 With lilies at the brink,  
 And sugar-sweet their sap.'

Golden head by golden head,  
 Like two pigeons in one nest  
 Folded in each other's wings,  
 They lay down in their curtained  
     bed :  
 Like two blossoms on one stem,  
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,  
 Like two wands of ivory  
 Tipped with gold for awful kings.  
 Moon and stars gazed in at them,  
 Wind sang to them lullaby,  
 Lumbering owls forebore to fly,  
 Not a bat flapped to and fro  
 Round their nest :  
 Cheek to cheek and breast to breast  
 Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning  
 When the first cock crowed his  
     warning,  
 Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,  
 Laura rose with Lizzie :  
 Fetched in honey, milked the cows,  
 Aired and set to rights the house,  
 Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,  
 Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,  
 Next churned butter, whipped up  
     cream,  
 Fed their poultry, sat and sewed ;  
 Talked as modest maidens should :  
 Lizzie with an open heart,  
 Laura in an absent dream,  
 One content, one sick in part ;

One warbling for the mere bright  
day's delight,  
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came :  
They went with pitchers to the  
reedy brook ;  
Lizzie most placid in her look,  
Laura most like a leaping flame.  
They drew the gurgling water from  
its deep.

Lizzie plucked purple and rich  
golden flags,  
Then turning homeward said : ' The  
sunset flushes

Those furthest loftiest crags ;  
Come, Laura, not another maiden  
lags.

No wilful squirrel wags,  
The beasts and birds are fast asleep.'  
But Laura loitered still among the  
rushes,  
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,  
The dew not fall'n, the wind not  
chill ;

Listening ever, but not catching  
The customary cry,  
' Come buy, come buy,'  
With its iterated jingle  
Of sugar-baited words :  
Not for all her watching  
Once discerning even one goblin  
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hob-  
bling.—

Let alone the herds  
That used to tramp along the glen,  
In groups or single,  
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, ' O Laura, come ;  
I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not  
look :

You should not loiter longer at this  
brook :

Come with me home.

The stars rise, the moon bends her  
arc,

Each glow-worm winks her spark,  
Let us get home before the night  
grows dark :

For clouds may gather  
Though this is summer weather,  
Put out the lights and drench us  
through ;

Then if we lost our way what should  
we do ?'

Laura turned cold as stone  
To find her sister heard that cry  
alone,

That goblin cry,  
' Come buy our fruits, come buy.'  
Must she then buy no more such  
dainty fruit ?

Must she no more such succous  
pasture\*find,

Gone deaf and blind ?  
Her tree of life drooped from the  
root :

She said not one word in her heart's  
sore *âche* :

But peering thro' the dimness,  
nought discerning,  
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping  
all the way ;

So crept to bed, and lay  
Silent till Lizzie slept ;  
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,  
And gnashed her teeth for baulked  
desire, and wept  
As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,  
Laura kept watch in vain  
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.



She never caught again the goblin  
cry,

‘Come buy, come buy ;’—

She never spied the goblin men  
Hawking their fruits along the glen :  
But when the noon waxed bright  
Her hair grew thin and grey ;  
She dwindled, as the fair full moon  
doth turn

To swift decay and burn  
Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-  
stone

She set it by a wall that faced the  
south ;

Dewed it with tears, hoped for a  
root,

Watched for a waxing shoot,

But there came none.

It never saw the sun,

It never felt the trickling moisture  
run :

While with sunk eyes and faded  
mouth

She dreamed of melons, as a  
traveller sees

False waves in desert drouth

With shade of leaf-crowned trees,

And burns the thirstier in the sand-  
ful breeze.

She no more swept the house,

Tended the fowls or cows,

Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of  
wheat,

Brought water from the brook :

But sat down listless in the chimney-  
nook

And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear

To watch her sister’s cankerous care,

Yet not to share.

She night and morning

Caught the goblins’ cry :

‘Come buy our orchard fruits,

Come buy, come buy :’—

Beside the brook, along the glen,  
She heard the tramp of goblin men,  
The voice and stir

Poor Laura could not hear ;

Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,

But feared to pay too dear.

She thought of Jeanie in her grave,  
Who should have been a bride ;

But who for joys brides hope to have  
Fell sick and died

In her gay prime,

In earliest winter time,

With the first glazing rime,

With the first snow-fall of crisp  
winter time.

Till Laura dwindling

Seemed knocking at Death’s door.

Then Lizzie weighed no more

Better and worse ;

But put a silver penny in her purse,

Kissed Laura, crossed the heath  
with clumps of furze

At twilight, halted by the brook :

And for the first time in her life

Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin

When they spied her peeping :

Came towards her hobbling,

Flying, running, leaping,

Puffing and blowing,

Chuckling, clapping, crowing,

Clucking and gobbling,

Mopping and mowing,

Full of airs and graces,

Pulling wry faces,

Demure grimaces,

Cat-like and rat-like,

Ratel- and wombat-like,

Snail-paced in a hurry,  
 Parrot-voiced and whistler,  
 Helter skelter, hurry skurry,  
 Chattering like magpies,  
 Fluttering like pigeons,  
 Gliding like fishes,—  
 Hugged her and kissed her :  
 Squeezed and caressed her :  
 Stretched up their dishes,  
 Panniers, and plates :  
 'Look at our apples  
 Russet and dun,  
 Bob at our cherries,  
 Bite at our peaches,  
 Citrons and dates,  
 Grapes for the asking,  
 Pears red with basking  
 Out in the sun,  
 Plums on their twigs ;  
 Pluck them and suck them,—  
 Pomegranates, figs.'

'Good folk,' said Lizzie,  
 Mindful of Jeanie :  
 'Give me much and many :'  
 Held out her apron,  
 Tossed them her penny.  
 'Nay, take a seat with us,  
 Honour and eat with us,'  
 They answered grinning :  
 'Our feast is but beginning.  
 Night yet is early,  
 Warm and dew-pearly,  
 Wakeful and starry :  
 Such fruits as these  
 No man can carry ;  
 Half their bloom would fly,  
 Half their dew would dry,  
 Half their flavour would pass by.  
 Sit down and feast with us,  
 Be welcome guest with us,  
 Cheer you and rest with us.'—  
 'Thank you,' said Lizzie : 'But one  
 waits

At home alone for me :  
 So without further parleying,  
 If you will not sell me any  
 Of your fruits though much and many,  
 Give me back my silver penny  
 I tossed you for a fee.'—  
 They began to scratch their pates,  
 No longer wagging, purring,  
 But visibly demurring,  
 Grunting and snarling.  
 One called her proud,  
 Cross-grained, uncivil ;  
 Their tones waxed loud,  
 Their looks were evil.  
 Lashing their tails  
 They trod and hustled her,  
 Elbowed and jostled her,  
 Clawed with their nails,  
 Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking,  
 Tore her gown and soiled her  
 stocking,  
 Twitched her hair out by the roots,  
 Stamped upon her tender feet,  
 Held her hands and squeezed their  
 fruits  
 Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,  
 Like a lily in a flood,—  
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone  
 Lashed by tides obstreperously,—  
 Like a beacon left alone  
 In a hoary roaring sea,  
 Sending up a golden fire,—  
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree  
 White with blossoms honey-sweet  
 Sore beset by wasp and bee,—  
 Like a royal virgin town  
 Topped with gilded dome and spire  
 Close beleaguered by a fleet  
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,  
 Twenty cannot make him drink.

Though the goblins cuffed and caught  
her,  
Coaxed and fought her,  
Bullied and besought her,  
Scratched her, pinched her black as  
ink,  
Kicked and knocked her,  
Mauled and mocked her,  
Lizzie uttered not a word ;  
Would not open lip from lip  
Lest they should cram a mouthful in :  
But laughed in heart to feel the drip  
Of juice that syruped all her face,  
And lodged in dimples of her chin,  
And streaked her neck which quaked  
like curd.

At last the evil people,  
Worn out by her resistance,  
Flung back her penny, kicked their  
fruit

Along whichever road they took,  
Not leaving root or stone or shoot ;  
Some writhed into the ground,  
Some dived into the brook  
With ring and ripple,  
Some scudded on the gale without a  
sound,  
Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,  
Lizzie went her way ;  
Knew not was it night or day ;  
Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the  
furze,

Threaded copse and dingle,  
And heard her penny jingle  
Bouncing in her purse,—  
Its bounce was music to her ear.  
She ran and ran  
As if she feared some goblin man  
Dogged her with gibe or curse  
Or something worse :  
But not one goblin skurried after,  
Nor was she pricked by fear ;

The kind heart made her windy-paced  
That urged her home quite out of  
breath with haste  
And inward laughter.

She cried, 'Laura,' up the garden,  
'Did you miss me ?  
Come and kiss me.  
Never mind my bruises,  
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices  
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,  
Goblin pulp and goblin dew.  
Eat me, drink me, love me ;  
Laura, make much of me ;  
For your sake I have braved the glen  
And had to do with goblin merchant  
men.'

Laura started from her chair,  
Flung her arms up in the air,  
Clutched her hair :  
'Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted  
For my sake the fruit forbidden ?  
Must your light like mine be hidden,  
Your young life like mine be wasted,  
Undone in mine undoing,  
And ruined in my ruin,  
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?'—  
She clung about her sister,  
Kissed and kissed and kissed her :  
Tears once again  
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,  
Dropping like rain  
After long sultry drouth ;  
Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,  
She kissed and kissed her with a  
hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,  
That juice was wormwood to her  
tongue,  
She loathed the feast :  
Writhing as one possessed she leaped  
and sung,  
Rent all her robe, and wrung

Her hands in lamentable haste,  
 And beat her breast.  
 Her locks streamed like the torch  
 Borne by a racer at full speed,  
 Or like the mane of horses in their  
 flight,  
 Or like an eagle when she stems the  
 light  
 Straight toward the sun,  
 Or like a caged thing freed,  
 Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins,  
 knocked at her heart,  
 Met the fire smouldering there  
 And overbore its lesser flame ;  
 She gorged on bitterness without a  
 name :

Ah fool, to choose such part  
 Of soul-consuming care !  
 Sense failed in the mortal strife :  
 Like the watch-tower of a town  
 Which an earthquake shatters down,  
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,  
 Like a wind-uprooted tree  
 Spun about,  
 Like a foam-topped waterspout  
 Cast down headlong in the sea,  
 She fell at last ;  
 Pleasure past and anguish past,  
 Is it death or is it life ?

Life out of death.  
 That night long Lizzie watched by  
 her,  
 Counted her pulse's flagging stir,  
 Felt for her breath,  
 Held water to her lips, and cooled  
 her face  
 With tears and fanning leaves.  
 But when the first birds chirped  
 about their eaves,  
 And early reapers plodded to the  
 place

Of golden sheaves,  
 And dew-wet grass  
 Bowed in the morning winds so brisk  
 to pass,  
 And new buds with new day  
 Opened of cup-like lilies on the  
 stream,  
 Laura awoke as from a dream,  
 Laughed in the innocent old way,  
 Hugged Lizzie but not twice or  
 thrice ;  
 Her gleaming locks showed not one  
 thread of grey,  
 Her breath was sweet as May,  
 And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years  
 Afterwards, when both were wives  
 With children of their own ;  
 Their mother-hearts beset with fears,  
 Their lives bound up in tender lives ;  
 Laura would call the little ones  
 And tell them of her early prime,  
 Those pleasant days long gone  
 Of not-returning time :  
 Would talk about the haunted glen,  
 The wicked quaint fruit-merchant  
 men,  
 Their fruits like honey to the throat  
 But poison in the blood  
 (Men sell not such in any town) :  
 Would tell them how her sister  
 stood

In deadly peril to do her good,  
 And win the fiery antidote :  
 Then joining hands to little hands  
 Would bid them cling together,—  
 'For there is no friend like a sister  
 In calm or stormy weather ;  
 To cheer one on the tedious way,  
 To fetch one if one goes astray,  
 To lift one if one totters down,  
 To strengthen whilst one stands.'

27 April 1859.

REPINING

SHE sat alway through the long day  
Spinning the weary thread away ;  
And ever said in undertone,  
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

From early dawn to set of sun  
Working, her task was still undone ;  
And the long thread seemed to increase  
Even while she spun and did not  
cease.

She heard the gentle turtle-dove  
Tell to its mate a tale of love ;  
She saw the glancing swallows fly,  
Ever a social company ;  
She knew each bird upon its nest  
Had cheering songs to bring it rest ;  
None lived alone save only she :—  
The wheel went round more wearily ;  
She wept and said in undertone,  
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

Day followed day and still she sighed  
For love, and was not satisfied ;  
Until one night, when the moonlight  
Turned all the trees to silver-white,  
She heard, what ne'er she heard before,

A steady hand undo the door.  
The nightingale since set of sun  
Her throbbing music had not done,  
And she had listened silently ;  
But now the wind had changed, and  
she

Heard the sweet song no more, but  
heard

Beside her bed a whispered word :  
'Damsel, rise up ; be not afraid ;  
For I am come at last,' it said.

She trembled, though the voice was  
mild ;

She trembled like a frightened  
child ;—

Till she looked up, and then she saw  
The unknown speaker without awe.  
He seemed a fair young man, his eyes  
Beaming with serious charities ;  
His cheek was white but hardly  
pale ;  
And a dim glory like a veil  
Hovered about his head, and shone  
Through the whole room till night  
was gone.

So her fear fled ; and then she said,  
Leaning upon her quiet bed :  
'Now thou art come, I prythee stay,  
That I may see thee in the day,  
And learn to know thy voice, and  
hear  
It evermore calling me near.'

He answered, 'Rise and follow me.  
But she looked upwards wonderingly :  
'And whither wouldst thou go,  
friend ? stay  
Until the dawning of the day.'  
But he said : 'The wind ceaseth,  
Maid ;  
Of chill nor damp be thou afraid.'

She bound her hair up from the  
floor,  
And passed in silence from the door.

So they went forth together, he  
Helping her forward tenderly.  
The hedges bowed beneath his  
hand ;

Forth from the streams came the  
dry land

As they passed over ; evermore  
The pallid moonbeams shone before ;  
And the wind hushed, and nothing  
stirred ;

Not even a solitary bird,  
Scared by their footsteps, fluttered by  
Where aspen-trees stood steadily.

As they went on, at length a sound  
Came trembling on the air around ;  
The undistinguishable hum  
Of life, voices that go and come  
Of busy men, and the child's sweet  
High laugh, and noise of trampling  
feet.

Then he said, 'Wilt thou go and  
see?'

And she made answer joyfully :  
'The noise of life, of human life,  
Of dear communion without strife,  
Of converse held 'twixt friend and  
friend ;

Is it not here our path shall end?'  
He led her on a little way  
Until they reached a hillock : 'Stay.'

It was a village in a plain.  
High mountains screened it from the  
rain  
And stormy wind ; and nigh at hand  
A bubbling streamlet flowed o'er  
sand

Pebbly and fine, and sent life up  
Green succous stalk and flower-cup.

Gradually, day's harbinger,  
A chilly wind began to stir.  
It seemed a gentle powerless breeze  
That scarcely rustled through the  
trees ;

And yet it touched the mountain's  
head

And the paths man might never  
tread.

But hearken : in the quiet weather  
Do all the streams flow down to-  
gether?—

No, 'tis a sound more terrible  
Than though a thousand rivers fell.  
The everlasting ice and snow  
Wereloosened then, but not to flow ;—  
With a loud crash like solid thunder  
The avalanche came, burying under  
The village ; turning life and breath  
And rest and joy and plans to  
death.

'Oh let us fly, for pity fly !  
Let us go hence, friend, thou and I.  
There must be many regions yet  
Where these things make not  
desolate.'

He looked upon her seriously ;  
Then said : 'Arise and follow me.'  
The path that lay before them was  
Nigh covered over with long grass ;  
And many slimy things and slow  
Trailed on between the roots below.  
The moon looked dimmer than  
before ;

And shadowy cloudlets floating o'er  
Its face sometimes quite hid its light,  
And filled the skies with deeper night.

At last, as they went on, the noise  
Was heard of the sea's mighty voice ;  
And soon the ocean could be seen  
In its long restlessness serene.  
Upon its breast a vessel rode  
That drowsily appeared to nod  
As the great billows rose and fell,  
And swelled to sink, and sank to  
swell.

Meanwhile the strong wind had  
come forth

From the chill regions of the North,  
The mighty wind invisible.  
And the low waves began to swell ;  
And the sky darkened overhead ;



And the moon once looked forth,  
then fled  
Behind dark clouds ; while here and  
there

The lightning shone out in the air,  
And the approaching thunder rolled  
With angry peelings manifold.

How many vows were made, and  
prayers

That in safe times were cold and  
scarce !

Still all availed not ; and at length  
The waves arose in all their strength,  
And fought against the ship, and  
filled

The ship. Then were the clouds  
unsealed,

And the rain hurried forth, and beat  
On every side and over it.

Some clung together, and some kept  
A long stern silence, and some wept.  
Many half crazed looked on in  
wonder

As the strong timbers rent asunder ;  
Friends forgot friends, foes fled to  
foes ;—

And still the water rose and rose.

Ah woe is me ! Whom I have seen  
Are now as though they had not been.  
In the earth there is room for birth,  
And there are graves enough in  
earth ;

Why should the cold sea, tempest-  
torn,

Bury those whom it hath not borne ?

He answered not, and they went on.  
The glory of the heavens was gone ;  
The moon gleamed not nor any star ;  
Cold winds were rustling near and far,  
And from the trees the dry leaves fell  
With a sad sound unspeakable.

The air was cold ; till from the South  
A gust blew hot, like sudden drouth,  
Into their faces ; and a light,  
Glowing and red, shone through the  
night.

A mighty city full of flame  
And death and sounds without a  
name.

Amid the black and blinding smoke,  
The people, as one man, awoke.

Oh happy they who yesterday  
On the long journey went away !  
Whose pallid lips, smiling and chill,  
While the flames scorch them smile  
on still ;

Who murmur not, who tremble not  
When the bier crackles fiery hot ;  
Who dying said in love's increase,  
' Lord, let thy servant part in peace.'

Those in the town could see and hear  
A shaded river flowing near ;  
The broad deep bed could hardly  
hold

Its plenteous waters calm and cold.  
Was flame-wrapt all the city wall,  
The city gates were flame-wrapt all.

What was man's strength, what  
puissance then ?

Women were mighty as strong men.  
Some knelt in prayer, believing still,  
Resigned into a righteous will,  
Bowing beneath the chastening rod,  
Lost to the world, but found of  
God.

Some prayed for friend, for child,  
for wife ;

Some prayed for faith ; some prayed  
for life ;

While some, proud even in death,  
hope gone,

Steadfast and still, stood looking on.

'Death—death—oh let us fly from death !

Where'er we go it followeth ;  
All these are dead ; and we alone  
Remain to weep for what is gone.  
What is this thing ? thus hurriedly  
To pass into eternity ;  
To leave the earth so full of mirth ;  
To lose the profit of our birth ;  
To die and be no more ; to cease,  
Having numbness that is not peace.  
Let us go hence ; and, even if thus  
Death everywhere must go with us,  
Let us not see the change, but see  
Those who have been or still shall be.'

He sighed, and they went on together.  
Beneath their feet did the grass  
wither ;

Across the heaven high overhead  
Dark misty clouds floated and fled ;  
And in their bosom was the thunder,  
And angry lightnings flashed out  
under,

Forked and red and menacing ;  
Far off the wind was muttering ;  
It seemed to tell, not understood,  
Strange secrets to the listening  
wood.

Upon its wings it bore the scent  
Of blood of a great armament :  
Then saw they how on either side  
Fields were down-trodden far and  
wide.

That morning at the break of day  
Two nations had gone forth to slay.

As a man soweth so he reaps.  
The field was full of bleeding heaps ;  
Ghastly corpses of men and horses  
That met death at a thousand sources ;  
Cold limbs and putrefying flesh ;  
Long love-locks clotted to a mesh

That stifled : stiffened mouths be-  
neath  
Staring eyes that had looked on death.

But these were dead : these felt no  
more

The anguish of the wounds they bore,  
Behold, they shall not sigh again,  
Nor justly fear, nor hope in vain.  
What if none wept above them ?—is  
The sleeper less at rest for this ?  
Is not the young child's slumber sweet  
When no man watcheth over it ?

These had deep calm ; but all around  
There was a deadly smothered sound,  
The choking cry of agony  
From wounded men who could not  
die ;

Who watched the black wing of the  
raven

Rise like a cloud 'twixt them and  
heaven,

And in the distance flying fast  
Beheld the eagle come at last.

She knelt down in her agony.  
'O Lord, it is enough,' said she :  
'My heart's prayer putteth me to  
shame ;

Let me return to whence I came.  
Thou who for love's sake didst re-  
prove,

Forgive me for the sake of love.'

*December 1847.*

### THREE NUNS

I

Sospira questo core,  
E non so dir perchè.

SHADOW, shadow on the wall,  
Spread thy shelter over me ;

Wrap me with a heavy pall,  
 With the dark that none may see :  
 Fold thyself around me, come ;  
 Shut out all the troublesome  
 Noise of life ; I would be dumb.

Shadow, thou hast reached my feet ;  
 Rise and cover up my head ;  
 Be my stainless winding-sheet,  
 Buried before I am dead.  
 Lay thy cool upon my breast :  
 Once I thought that joy was best,  
 Now I only care for rest.

By the grating of my cell  
 Sings a solitary bird ;  
 Sweeter than the vesper bell,  
 Sweetest song was ever heard.<sup>1</sup>  
 Sing upon thy living tree ;  
 Happy echoes answer thee ;  
 Happy songster, sing to me.

When my yellow hair was curled,  
 Though men saw and called me  
 fair,  
 was weary in the world  
 Full of vanity and care.  
 Gold was left behind, curls shorn,  
 When I came here ; that same morn  
 Made a bride no gems adorn.

Here wrapt in my spotless veil,  
 Curtained from intruding eyes,  
 Whom prayers and fasts turn pale  
 Wait the flush of Paradise.  
 But the vigil is so long  
 My heart sickens :—sing thy song,  
 O lythe bird that canst do no wrong.

ing on, making me forget  
 Present sorrow and past sin.

<sup>1</sup> "Sweetest eyes were ever seen."  
 E. B. BROWNING.

Sing a little longer yet :  
 Soon the matins will begin ;  
 And I must turn back again  
 To that aching, worse than pain,—  
 I must bear and not complain.

Sing ; that in thy song I may  
 Dream myself once more a child  
 In the green woods far away,  
 Plucking clematis and wild  
 Hyacinths, till pleasure grew  
 Tired, yet so was pleasure too,  
 Resting with no work to do.

In the thickest of the wood  
 I remember long ago  
 How a stately oaktree stood  
 With a sluggish pool below  
 Almost shadowed out of sight ;  
 On the waters dark as night  
 Water-lilies lay like light.

There, while yet a child, I thought  
 I could live as in a dream ;  
 Secret, neither found not sought ;  
 Till the lilies on the stream,  
 Pure as virgin purity,  
 Would seem scarce too pure for me :—  
 Ah but that can never be !

## II

Sospirerà d' amore,  
 Ma non lo dice a me.

I loved him ; yes, where was the sin ?  
 I loved him with my heart and soul ;  
 But I pressed forward to no goal,  
 There was no prize I strove to win.  
 Show me my sin that I may see :  
 Throw the first stone, thou Pharisee.

I loved him, but I never sought  
 That he should know that I was  
 fair.

I prayed for him ; was my sin  
 . prayer ?

I sacrificed, he never bought ;  
 He nothing gave, he nothing took ;  
 We never bartered look for look.

My voice rose in the sacred choir,  
 The choir of nuns : do you condemn

Even if when kneeling among  
 them

Faith, zeal, and love, kindled a fire,  
 And I prayed for his happiness  
 Who knew not ? was my error this ?

I only prayed that in the end  
 His trust and hope may not be  
 vain ;

I prayed not we may meet again :  
 I would not let our names ascend,  
 No not to Heaven, in the same  
 breath ;  
 Nor will I join the two in death.

Oh sweet is death, for I am weak  
 And weary, and it giveth rest.  
 The crucifix lies on my breast,  
 And all night long it seems to speak  
 Of rest ; I hear it through my sleep,  
 And the great comfort makes me  
 weep.

Oh sweet is death that bindeth up  
 The broken and the bleeding  
 heart.

The draught chilled, but a cordial  
 part

Lurked at the bottom of the cup ;  
 And for my patience will my Lord  
 Give an exceeding great reward.

Yea the reward is almost won,  
 A crown of glory and a palm.

Soon I shall sing the unknown  
 psalm ;

Soon gaze on light, not on the sun ;  
 And soon with surer faith shall pray  
 For him, and cease not night nor  
 day.

My life is breaking like a cloud—  
 God judgeth not as man doth  
 judge—

Nay, bear with me : you need not  
 grudge

This peace ; the vows that I have  
 vowed

Have all been kept : Eternal Strength  
 Holds me, though mine own fails at  
 length.

Bury me in the Convent-ground  
 Among the flowers that are so  
 sweet ;

And lay a green turf at my feet,  
 Where thick trees cast a gloom  
 around ;

At my head let a cross be, white  
 Through the long blackness of the  
 night.

Now kneel and pray beside my bed  
 That I may sleep being free from  
 pain ;

And pray that I may wake again  
 After His likeness who hath said  
 (Faithful is He who promiseth)  
 We shall be satisfied therewith.

### III

Rispondimi, cor mio,  
 Perchè sospiri tu ?  
 Risponde : Voglio Dio,  
 Sospiro per Gesù.

My heart is as a freeborn bird  
 Caged in my cruel breast,

That flutters, flutters evermore,  
 Nor sings nor is at rest,  
 But beats against the prison bars,  
 As knowing its own nest  
 Far off beyond the clouded west.

My soul is as a hidden fount  
 Shut in by clammy clay  
 That struggles with an upward moan,  
 Striving to force its way  
 Up through the turf, over the grass,  
 Up up into the day  
 Where twilight no more turneth grey.

Oh for the grapes of the True Vine  
 Growing in Paradise,  
 Whose tendrils join the Tree of Life  
 To that which maketh wise—  
 Growing beside the Living Well  
 Whose sweetest waters rise  
 Where tears are wiped from tearful  
 eyes!

Oh for the waters of that Well  
 Round which the Angels stand—  
 Oh for the Shadow of the Rock  
 On my heart's weary land—  
 Oh for the Voice to guide me when  
 I turn to either hand,  
 Guiding me till I reach heaven's  
 strand!

Thou world from which I am come  
 out,  
 Keep all thy gems and gold;  
 Keep thy delights and precious  
 things,  
 Thou that art waxing old.  
 My heart shall beat with a new life  
 When thine is dead and cold;  
 When thou dost fear I shall be bold.

When Earth shall pass away with all  
 Her pride and pomp of sin,

The City builded without hands  
 Shall safely shut me in.  
 All the rest is but vanity  
 Which others strive to win:  
 Where their hopes end my joys  
 begin.

I will not look upon a rose  
 Though it is fair to see:  
 The flowers planted in Paradise  
 Are budding now for me:  
 Red roses like love visible  
 Are blowing on their tree,  
 Or white like virgin purity.

I will not look unto the sun  
 Which setteth night by night:  
 In the untrodden courts of heaven  
 My crown shall be more bright.  
 Lo in the New Jerusalem  
 Founded and built aright  
 My very feet shall tread on light.

With foolish riches of this world  
 I have bought treasure where  
 Nought perisheth: for this white  
 veil  
 I gave my golden hair;  
 I gave the beauty of my face  
 For vigils, fasts, and prayer;  
 I gave all for this cross I bear.

My heart trembled when first I took  
 The vows which must be kept.  
 At first it was a weariness  
 To watch when once I slept:  
 The path was rough and sharp with  
 thorns;  
 My feet bled as I stept;  
 The cross was heavy and I wept.

While still the names rang in mine  
 ears  
 Of daughter, sister, wife,

The outside world still looked so  
fair

To my weak eyes, and rife  
With beauty, my heart almost failed;  
Then in the desperate strife  
I prayed, as one who prays for life,—

Until I grew to love what once  
Had been so burdensome.  
So now, when I am faint because  
Hope deferred seems to numb  
My heart, I yet can plead, and say,  
Although my lips are dumb—  
The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.  
*12 February 1849 to 10 May 1850.*

### THE LOWEST ROOM

LIKE flowers sequestered from the  
sun

And wind of summer, day by day  
I dwindled paler, whilst my hair  
Showed the first tinge of grey.

‘Oh what is life, that we should  
live?

Or what is death, that we must  
die?

A bursting bubble is our life :  
I also, what am I?’

‘What is your grief? now tell me,  
sweet,

That I may grieve,’ my sister  
said;

And stayed a white embroidering  
hand

And raised a golden head :

Her tresses showed a richer mass,  
Her eyes looked softer than my  
own;

Her figure had a statelier height,  
Her voice a tenderer tone.

‘Some must be second and not first;  
All cannot be the first of ail :  
Is not this too but vanity?  
I stumble like to fall.

‘So yesterday I read the acts  
Of Hector and each clangorous  
king  
With wrathful great Æacides :—  
Old Homer leaves a sting.’

The comely face looked up again,  
The deft hand lingered on the  
thread.

‘Sweet, tell me what is Homer’s  
sting,  
Old Homer’s sting,’ she said.

‘He stirs my sluggish pulse like  
wine,

He melts me like the wind of spice,  
Strong as strong Ajax’ red right  
hand,

And grand like Juno’s eyes.

‘I cannot melt the sons of men,  
I cannot fire and tempest-toss :—  
Besides, those days were golden days,  
Whilst these are days of dross.’

She laughed a feminine low laugh,  
Yet did not stay her dexterous  
hand :

‘Now tell me of those days,’ she  
said,

‘When time ran golden sand.’

‘Then men were men of might and  
right,

Sheer might, at least, and weighty  
swords :

Then men in open blood and fire  
Bore witness to their words—



'Crest-rearing kings with whistling  
spears ;  
But if these shivered in the shock  
They wrenched up hundred-rooted  
trees,  
Or hurled the effacing rock.

'Then hand to hand, then foot to  
foot,  
Stern to the death-grip grappling  
then,  
Who ever thought of gunpowder  
Amongst these men of men ?

'They knew whose hand struck home  
the death,  
They knew who broke but would  
not bend,  
Could venerate an equal foe  
And scorn a laggard friend.

'Calm in the utmost stress of doom,  
Devout toward adverse powers  
above,  
They hated with intenser hate  
And loved with fuller love.

'Then heavenly beauty could allay  
As heavenly beauty stirred the  
strife :  
By them a slave was worshipped  
more  
Than is by us a wife.'

She laughed again, my sister laughed ;  
Made answer o'er the laboured  
cloth,

'I rather would be one of us  
Than wife, or slave, or both.'

'Oh better then be slave or wife  
Than fritter now blank life away :  
Then night had holiness of night,  
And day was sacred day.

R

'The princess laboured at her loom,  
Mistress and handmaiden alike ;  
Beneath their needles grew the field  
With warriors armed to strike.

'Or, look again, dim Dian's face  
Gleamed perfect through the at-  
tendant night ;  
Were such not better than those  
holes  
Amid that waste of white ?

'A shame it is, our aimless life ;  
I rather from my heart would feed  
From silver dish in gilded stall  
With wheat and wine the steed,

'The faithful steed that bore my lord .  
In safety through the hostile land,  
The faithful steed that arched his  
neck  
To fondle with my hand.'

Her needle erred ; a moment's pause,  
A moment's patience, all was well.  
Then she : 'But just suppose the  
horse,  
Suppose the rider fell ?

'Then captive in an alien house,  
Hungering on exile's bitter  
bread,—  
They happy, they who won the lot  
Of sacrifice,' she said.

Speaking she faltered, while her look  
Showed forth her passion like a  
glass ;  
With hand suspended, kindling eye,  
Flushed cheek, how fair she  
was !

'Ah well, be those the days of dross ;  
This, if you will, the age of gold :

C

Yet had those days a spark of  
warmth,  
While these are somewhat  
cold—

‘Are somewhat mean and cold and  
slow,  
Are stunted from heroic growth :  
We gain but little when we prove  
The worthlessness of both.’

‘But life is in our hands,’ she said :  
‘In our own hands for gain or  
loss :

Shall not the Sevenfold Sacred Fire  
Suffice to purge our dross ?

‘Too short a century of dreams,  
One day of work sufficient length ;  
Why should not you, why should  
not I,  
Attain heroic strength ?

‘Our life is given us as a blank ;  
Ourselves must make it blest or  
curst :

Who dooms me I shall only be  
The second, not the first ?

‘Learn from old Homer, if you will,  
Such wisdom as his books have  
said :

In one the acts of Ajax shine,  
In one of Diomed.

‘Honoured all heroes whose high  
deeds  
Through life, through death, en-  
large their span ;  
Only Achilles in his rage  
And sloth is less than man.’

‘Achilles only less than man ?  
He less than man who, half a god,

Discomfited all Greece with rest,  
Cowed Ilion with a nod ?

‘He offered vengeance, lifelong grief  
To one dear ghost, uncounted  
price :

Beasts, Trojans, adverse gods, himself,  
Heaped up the sacrifice.

‘Self-immolated to his friend,  
Shrined in world’s wonder, Homer’s  
page,

Is this the man, the less than men  
Of this degenerate age ?’

‘Gross from his acorns, tusky boar  
Does memorable acts like his ;  
So for her snared offended young  
Bleeds the swart lioness.’

But here she paused ; our eyes had  
met,

And I was whitening with the jeer ;  
She rose ; ‘I went too far,’ she said ;  
Spoke low ; ‘Forgive me, dear.

‘To me our days seem pleasant days,  
Our home a haven of pure content ;  
Forgive me if I said too much,  
So much more than I meant.

‘Homer, though greater than his  
gods,  
With rough-hewn virtues was  
sufficed

And rough-hewn men : but what are  
such

To us who learn of Christ ?’

The much-moved pathos of her voice,  
Her almost tearful eyes, her cheek  
Grown pale, confessed the strength  
of love

Which only made her speak :

For mild she was, of few soft  
words,  
Most gentle, easy to be led,  
Content to listen when I spoke  
And reverence what I said ;

I elder sister by six years ;  
Not half so glad, or wise, or  
good :  
Her words rebuked my secret self  
And shamed me where I stood.

She never guessed her words re-  
proved  
A silent envy nursed within,  
A selfish, souring discontent,  
Pride-born, the devil's sin.

I smiled, half bitter, half in jest :  
'The wisest man of all the wise  
Left for his summary of life  
"Vanity of vanities."

'Beneath the sun there's nothing  
new :  
Men flow, men ebb, mankind  
flows on :

If I am wearied of my life,  
Why so was Solomon.

'Vanity of vanities he preached  
Of all he found, of all he sought :  
Vanities of vanities, the gist  
Of all the words he taught.

'This in the wisdom of the world,  
In Homer's page, in all, we find :  
As the sea is not filled, so years  
Man's universal mind.

'This Homer felt, who gave his men  
With glory but a transient state :  
His very Jove could not reverse  
Irrevocable fate.

'Uncertain all their lot save this—  
Who wins must lose, who lives  
must die :  
All trodden out into the dark  
Alike, all vanity.'

She scarcely answered when I paused  
But rather to herself said : 'One  
Is here,' low-voiced and loving, 'yea,  
Greater than Solomon.'

So both were silent, she and I :  
She laid her work aside, and went  
Into the garden-walks, like Spring,  
All gracious with content ;

A little graver than her wont,  
Because her words had fretted me ;  
Not warbling quite her merriest tune  
Bird-like from tree to tree.

I chose a book to read and dream :  
Yet half the while with furtive eyes  
Marked how she made her choice of  
flowers  
Intuitively wise,

And ranged them with instinctive  
taste  
Which all my books had failed to  
teach ;  
Fresh rose herself, and daintier  
Than blossom of the peach.

By birthright higher than myself,  
Though nestling of the self-same  
nest :  
No fault of hers, no fault of mine,  
But stubborn to digest.

I watched her, till my book unmarked  
Slid noiseless to the velvet floor ;  
Till all the opulent summer-world  
Looked poorer than before.

Just then her busy fingers ceased,  
Her fluttered colour went and  
came :

I knew whose step was on the walk,  
Whose voice would name her  
name.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Well, twenty years have passed since  
then :

My sister now, a stately wife  
Still fair, looks back in peace and sees  
The longer half of life—

The longer half of prosperous life,  
With little grief, or fear, or fret :  
She, loved and loving long ago,  
Is loved and loving yet.

A husband honourable, brave,  
Is her main wealth in all the world :  
And next to him one like herself,  
One daughter golden-curved ;

Fair image of her own fair youth,  
As beautiful and as serene,  
With almost such another love  
As her own love has been.

Yet, though of world-wide charity,  
And in her home most tender  
dove,

Her treasure and her heart are stored  
In the home-land of love :

She thrives, God's blessed husbandry ;  
Most like a vine which full of  
fruit

Doth cling and lean and climb  
toward heaven

While earth still binds its root.

I sit and watch my sister's face :  
How little altered since the hours  
When she, a kind light-hearted girl,  
Gathered her garden flowers,

Her song just mellowed by regret  
For having teased me with her  
talk ;

Then all-forgotten as she heard  
One step upon the walk.

While I ? I sat alone and watched ;  
My lot in life, to live alone  
In mine own world of interests,  
Much felt but little shown.

Not to be first : how hard to learn  
That lifelong lesson of the past ;  
Line graven on line and stroke on  
stroke,  
But, thank God, learned at  
last.

So now in patience I possess  
My soul year after tedious year,  
Content to take the lowest place,  
The place assigned me here.

Yet sometimes, when I feel my  
strength  
Most weak, and life most burden-  
some,  
I lift mine eyes up to the hills  
From whence my help shall  
come :

Yea, sometimes still I lift my heart  
To the Archangelic trumpet-burst,  
When all deep secrets shall be shown,  
And many last be first.

30 September 1856.

## FROM HOUSE TO HOME

THE first was like a dream through  
summer heat,  
The second like a tedious numbing  
swoon

While the half-frozen pulses lagged  
to beat  
Beneath a winter moon.

'But,' says my friend, 'what was  
this thing and where?'

It was a pleasure-place within my  
soul ;

An earthly paradise supremely fair  
That lured me from the goal.

The first part was a tissue of hugged  
lies ;

The second was its ruin fraught  
with pain :

Why raise the fair delusion to the  
skies

But to be dashed again ?

My castle stood of white transparent  
glass

Glittering and frail with many a  
fretted spire,

But when the summer sunset came  
to pass

It kindled into fire.

My pleasaunce was an undulating  
green,

Stately with trees whose shadows  
slept below,

With glimpses of smooth garden-  
beds between

Like flame or sky or snow.

Swift squirrels on the pastures took  
their ease,

With leaping lambs safe from the  
unfeared knife ;

All singing-birds rejoicing in those  
trees

Fulfilled their careless life.

Woodpigeons cooed there, stock-  
doves nestled there ;

My trees were full of songs and  
flowers and fruit ;

Their branches spread a city to the  
air

And mice lodged in their root.

My heath lay farther off, where  
lizards lived

In strange metallic mail, just spied  
and gone ;

Like darted lightnings here and there  
perceived

But nowhere dwelt upon.

Frogs and fat toads were there to  
hop or plod

And propagate in peace, an un-  
couth crew,

Where velvet-headed rushes rustling  
nod

And spill the morning dew.

All caterpillars throve beneath my  
rule,

With snails and slugs in corners  
out of sight ;

I never marred the curious sudden  
stool

That perfects in a night.

Safe in his excavated gallery

The burrowing mole groped on  
from year to year ;

No harmless hedgehog curled be-  
cause of me

His prickly back for fear.

Oft-times one like an angel walked  
with me,

With spirit-discerning eyes like  
flames of fire

But deep as the unfathomed endless  
sea,

Fulfilling my desire :

And sometimes like a snowdrift he  
 was fair,  
 And sometimes like a sunset  
 glorious red,  
 And sometimes he had wings to  
 scale the air  
 With aureole round his head.

We sang our songs together by the  
 way,  
 Calls and recalls and echoes of  
 delight ;  
 So communed we together all the  
 day,  
 And so in dreams by night.

I have no words to tell what way we  
 walked,  
 What unforgotten path now closed  
 and sealed :  
 I have no words to tell all things we  
 talked,  
 All things that he revealed :

This only can I tell : that hour by  
 hour  
 I waxed more feastful, lifted up  
 and glad ;  
 I felt no thorn-prick when I plucked  
 a flower,  
 Felt not my friend was sad.

‘To-morrow,’ once I said to him  
 with smiles.  
 ‘To-night,’ he answered gravely ;  
 and was dumb,  
 But pointed out the stones that  
 numbered miles  
 And miles and miles to come.

‘Not so,’ I said : ‘to-morrow shall  
 be sweet :  
 To-night is not so sweet as coming  
 days.’

Then first I saw that he had turned  
 his feet,  
 Had turned from me his face :

Running and flying miles and miles  
 he went,  
 But once looked back to beckon  
 with his hand,  
 And cry : ‘Come home, O love,  
 from banishment :  
 Come to the distant land.’

That night destroyed me like an  
 avalanche ;  
 One night turned all my summer  
 back to snow :  
 Next morning not a bird upon my  
 branch,  
 Not a lamb woke below,—

No bird, no lamb, no living breath-  
 ing thing ;  
 No squirrel scampered on my  
 breezy lawn,  
 No mouse lodged by his hoard : all  
 joys took wing  
 And fled before that dawn.

Azure and sun were starved from  
 heaven above,  
 No dew had fallen, but biting  
 frost lay hoar :  
 O love, I knew that I should meet  
 my love,  
 Should find my love no more.

‘My love no more,’ I muttered,  
 stunned with pain :  
 I shed no tear, I wrung no  
 passionate hand,  
 Till something whispered : ‘You  
 shall meet again,  
 Meet in a distant land.’



Then with a cry like famine I arose,  
 I lit my candle, searched from  
 room to room,  
 Searched up and down ; a war of  
 winds that froze  
 Swept through the blank of gloom.

I searched day after day, night after  
 night ;  
 Scant change there came to me  
 of night or day :  
 'No more,' I wailed, 'no more :'  
 and trimmed my light,  
 And gnashed but did not pray,

Until my heart broke and my spirit  
 broke :  
 Upon the frost-bound floor I  
 stumbled, fell,  
 And moaned : 'It is enough : with-  
 hold the stroke.  
 Farewell, O love, farewell.'

Then life swooned from me. And  
 I heard the song  
 Of spheres and spirits rejoicing  
 over me :  
 One cried : 'Our sister, she hath  
 suffered long.'—  
 One answered : 'Make her see.'

One cried : 'Oh blessèd she who  
 no more pain,  
 Who no more disappointment  
 shall receive.'—  
 One answered : 'Not so : she must  
 live again ;  
 Strengthen thou her to live.'

So while I lay entranced a curtain  
 seemed  
 To shrivel with crackling from  
 before my face :

Across mine eyes a waxing radiance  
 beamed  
 And showed a certain place.

I saw a vision of a woman, where  
 Night and new morning strive for  
 domination ;  
 Incomparably pale, and almost fair,  
 And sad beyond expression.

Her eyes were like some fire-  
 enshrining gem,  
 Were stately like the stars, and  
 yet were tender ;  
 Her figure charmed me like a windy  
 stem  
 Quivering and drooped and  
 slender.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,  
 She stood on inner ground that  
 budded flowers ;  
 While circling in their never-slacken-  
 ing round  
 Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,  
 And every thorn shot upright from  
 its sands  
 To gall her feet ; hoarse laughter  
 pealed in scorn  
 With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not  
 shrink ; her strength  
 Was strung up until daybreak of  
 delight :  
 She measured measureless sorrow  
 toward its length,  
 And breadth, and depth, and  
 height.

Then marked I how a chain sustained  
 her form,

A chain of living links not made  
nor riven :  
It stretched sheer up through light-  
ning, wind, and storm,  
And anchored fast in heaven.

One cried : 'How long? yet founded  
on the Rock  
She shall do battle, suffer, and  
attain.'—

One answered : 'Faith quakes in  
the tempest shock—  
Strengthen her soul again.'

I saw a cup sent down and come to  
her  
Brimfull of loathing and of bitter-  
ness :  
She drank with livid lips that seemed  
to stir  
The depth, not make it less.

But as she drank I spied a hand distil  
New wine and virgin honey ;  
making it  
First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed,  
until  
She tasted only sweet.

Her lips and cheeks waxed rosy-  
fresh and young ;  
Drinking she sang 'My soul shall  
nothing want ;'  
And drank anew : while soft a song  
was sung,  
A mystical slow chant.

One cried : 'The wounds are faith-  
ful of a friend :  
The wilderness shall blossom as  
a rose.'—

One answered : 'Rend the veil,  
declare the end,  
Strengthen her ere she goes.'

Then earth and heaven were rolled  
up like a scroll ;  
Time and space, change and  
death, had passed away ;  
Weight, number, measure, each had  
reached its whole :  
The day had come, that day.

Multitudes—multitudes—stood up  
in bliss,  
Made equal to the angels, glorious,  
fair ;  
With harps, palms, wedding-gar-  
ments, kiss of peace,  
And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in  
the height,  
Harping with harps to Him who  
is strong and true :  
They drank new wine, their eyes  
saw with new light,  
Lo all things were made new.

Tier beyond tier they rose and rose  
and rose,  
So high that it was dreadful,  
flames with flames :  
No man could number them, no  
tongue disclose  
Their secret sacred names.

As though one pulse stirred all, one  
rush of blood  
Fed all, one breath swept through  
them myriad-voiced,  
They struck their harps, cast down  
their crowns, they stood  
And worshipped and rejoiced.

Each face looked one way like a  
moon new-lit,  
Each face looked one way towards  
its Sun of Love ;

Drank love and bathed in love and  
mirrored it  
And knew no end thereof.

Glory touched glory on each blessed  
head,

Hands locked dear hands never  
to sunder more :

These were the new-begotten from  
the dead

Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered  
soul at rest,

Double against each other, filled,  
sufficed :

All loving, loved of all ; but loving best  
And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in  
pain,

Who trod on thorns, who drank  
the loathsome cup ;

The lost in night, in day was found  
again ;

The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blessed  
noon,

They sang together through the  
length of days ;

Each loving face bent Sunwards like  
a moon

New-lit with love and praise.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if  
I might

Rebuild my house of lies, wherein  
I joyed

One time to dwell : my soul shall  
walk in white,

Cast down but not destroyed.

Therefore in patience I possess my  
soul ;

Yea, therefore as a flint I set my  
face,

To pluck down, to build up again  
the whole—

But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can  
tread on them ;

This cup is loathsome, yet He  
makes it sweet :

My face is steadfast toward Jeru-  
salem,

My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble  
knees—

I, precious more than seven times  
molten gold—

Until the day when from His  
storehouses

God shall bring new and old ;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,  
Garment of praise for spirit of  
heaviness :

Although to-day I fade as doth a leaf,  
I languish and grow less.

Although to-day He prunes my twigs  
with pain,

Yet doth His blood nourish and  
warm my root :

To-morrow I shall put forth buds  
again

And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious  
ways,

To-day His staff is turned into a  
rod,

Yet will I wait for Him the appointed  
days

And stay upon my God.

19 November 1858.

## THE PRINCE'S PROGRESS

TILL all sweet gums and juices flow,  
 Till the blossom of blossoms blow,  
 The long hours go and come and go;  
 The bride she sleepeth, waketh,  
 sleepeth,  
 Waiting for one whose coming is  
 slow :—  
 Hark ! the bride weepeth.

‘How long shall I wait, come heat  
 come rime?’—  
 ‘Till the strong Prince comes, who  
 must come in time’  
 (Her women say): ‘there’s a moun-  
 tain to climb,  
 A river to ford. Sleep, dream and  
 sleep;  
 Sleep’ (they say): ‘we’ve muffled  
 the chime;  
 Better dream than weep.’

In his world-end palace the strong  
 Prince sat,  
 Taking his ease on cushion and mat;  
 Close at hand lay his staff and his hat.  
 ‘When wilt thou start? the bride  
 waits, O youth.’—  
 ‘Now the moon’s at full; I tarried  
 for that;  
 Now I start in truth.

‘But tell me first, true voice of my  
 doom,  
 Of my veiled bride in her maiden  
 bloom;  
 Keeps she watch through glare and  
 through gloom,  
 Watch for me asleep and  
 awake?’—  
 ‘Spell-bound she watches in one  
 white room,  
 And is patient for thy sake.

‘By her head lilies and rosebuds  
 grow;  
 The lilies droop, will the rosebuds  
 blow?  
 The silver slim lilies hang the head  
 low;  
 Their stream is scanty, their sun-  
 shine rare:  
 Let the sun blaze out, and let the  
 stream flow,  
 They will blossom and wax fair.

‘Red and white poppies grow at her  
 feet.  
 The blood-red wait for sweet summer  
 heat,  
 Wrapped in bud-coats, hairy and  
 neat;  
 But the white buds swell, one day  
 they will burst,  
 Will open their death cups drowsy  
 and sweet :—  
 Which will open the first?’

Then a hundred sad voices lifted a  
 wail,  
 And a hundred glad voices piped on  
 the gale:  
 ‘Time is short, life is short,’ they  
 took up the tale:  
 ‘Life is sweet, love is sweet, use  
 to-day while you may;  
 Love is sweet, and to-morrow may  
 fail;  
 Love is sweet, use to-day.’

While the song swept by, beseech-  
 ing and meek,  
 Up rose the Prince with a flush on  
 his cheek,  
 Up he rose to stir and to seek,  
 Going forth in the joy of his  
 strength:

Strong of limb if of purpose weak,  
Starting at length.

Forth he set in the breezy morn,  
Across green fields of nodding corn,  
As goodly a Prince as ever was born,  
Carolling with the carolling lark;—  
Sure his bride will be won and worn  
Ere fall of the dark.

So light his step, so merry his smile,  
A milkmaid loitered beside a stile,  
Set down her pail and rested awhile,  
A wave-haired milkmaid, rosy and  
white;  
The Prince, who had journeyed at  
least a mile,  
Grew athirst at the sight.

'Will you give me a morning  
draught?'—

'You're kindly welcome,' she said,  
and laughed.

He lifted the pail, new milk he  
quaffed;

Then wiping his curly black beard  
like silk:

'Whitest cow that ever was calved  
Surely gave you this milk.'

Was it milk now, or was it cream?  
Was she a maid, or an evil dream?  
Her eyes began to glitter and gleam;  
He would have gone, but he stayed  
instead;

Green they gleamed as he looked in  
them:

'Give me my fee,' she said.—

'I will give you a jewel of gold.'—

'Not so; gold is heavy and cold.'—

'I will give you a velvet fold.

Of foreign work your beauty to  
deck.'—

'Better I like my kerchief rolled  
Light and white round my  
neck.'—

'Nay,' cried he, 'but fix your own  
fee.'—

She laughed, 'You may give the full  
moon to me,

Or else sit under this apple-tree

Here for one idle day by my side;

After that I'll let you go free,

And the world is wide.'

Loth to stay, yet to leave her slack,

He half turned away, then he quite  
turned back:

For courtesy's sake he could not  
lack

To redeem his own royal pledge;

Ahead too the windy heaven lowered  
black

With a fire-cloven edge.

So he stretched his length in the  
apple-tree shade,

Lay and laughed and talked to the  
maid,

Who twisted her hair in a cunning  
braid

And writhed it in shining serpent-  
coils,

And held him a day and a night fast  
laid

In her subtle toils.

At the death of night and the birth  
of day,

When the owl left off his sober play,  
And the bat hung himself out of the

way,

Woke the song of mavis and  
merle,

And heaven put off its hodden grey  
For mother-o'-pearl.

Peeped up daisies here and there,  
 Here, there, and everywhere ;  
 Rose a hopeful lark in the air,  
     Spreading out towards the sun his  
     breast ;

While the moon set solemn and fair  
     Away in the West.

'Up, up, up,' called the watchman  
     lark,

In his clear *réveillée* ; 'Hearken, oh  
     hark !

Press to the high goal, fly to the mark.

Up, O sluggard, new morn is born ;  
 If still asleep when the night falls  
     dark,

Thou must wait a second morn.'

'Up, up, up,' sad glad voices swelled :

'So the tree falls and lies as it's felled.

Be thy bands loosed, O sleeper, long  
     held

In sweet sleep whose end is not  
     sweet.

Be the slackness girt and the softness  
     quelled

And the slowness fleet.'

Off he set. The grass grew rare,  
 A blight lurked in the darkening air,  
 The very moss grew hueless and  
     spare,

The last daisy stood all astunt ;  
 Behind his back the soil lay bare,  
     But barer in front.

A land of chasm and rent, a land  
 Of rugged blackness on either hand :  
 If water trickled its track was tanned  
     With an edge of rust to the chink ;  
 If one stamped on stone or on sand  
     It returned a clink.

A lifeless land, a loveless land,  
 Without lair or nest on either hand :

Only scorpions jerked in the sand,  
     Black as black iron, or dusty pale ;  
 From point to point sheer rock was  
     manned  
     By scorpions in mail.

A land of neither life nor death,  
 Where no man buildeth or fashioneth,  
 Where none draws living or dying  
     breath ;

No man cometh or goeth there,  
 No man doeth, seeketh, saith,  
     In the stagnant air.

Some old volcanic upset must  
 Have rent the crust and blackened  
     the crust,

Wrenched and ribbed it beneath its  
     dust,

Above earth's molten centre at  
     seethe,

Heaved and heaped it by huge up-  
     thrust

Of fire beneath.

Untrodden before, untrodden since :  
 Tedious land for a social Prince ;  
 Halting, he scanned the outs and ins,  
     Endless, labyrinthine, grim,  
 Of the solitude that made him wince,  
     Laying wait for him.

By bulging rock and gaping cleft,  
 Even of half mere daylight reft,  
 Rueful he peered to right and left,  
     Muttering in his altered mood :  
 'The fate is hard that weaves my  
     weft,  
     Though my lot be good.'

Dim the changes of day to night,  
 Of night scarce dark to day not  
     bright.



Still his road wound towards the  
right,

Still he went, and still he went,  
Till one night he spied a light,  
In his discontent.

Out it flashed from a yawn-mouthed  
cave,

Like a red-hot eye from a grave.  
No man stood there of whom to  
crave

Rest for wayfarer plodding by :  
Though the tenant were churl or  
knave  
The Prince might try.

In he passed and tarried not,  
Groping his way from spot to spot,  
Towards where the cavern flare  
glowed hot :

An old, old mortal, cramped and  
double,  
Was peering into a seething-pot,  
In a world of trouble.

The veriest atomy he looked,  
With grimy fingers clutching and  
crooked,

Tight skin, a nose all bony and  
hooked,

And a shaking, sharp, suspicious  
way ;

Blinking, his eyes had scarcely  
brookd

The light of day.

Stared the Prince, for the sight was  
new ;

Stared, but asked without more ado ;  
'May a weary traveller lodge with  
you,

Old father, here in your lair ?  
In your country the inns seem few,  
And scanty the fare.'

The head turned not to hear him  
speak ;

The old voice whistled as through a  
leak

(Out it came in a quavering squeak):

'Work for wage is a bargain fit :  
If there's aught of mine that you seek  
You must work for it.

'Buried alive from light and air  
This year is the hundredth year,  
I feed my fire with a sleepless care,  
Watching my potion wane or wax :  
Elixir of Life is simmering there,  
And but one thing lacks.

'If you're fain to lodge here with me,  
Take that pair of bellows you see—  
Too heavy for my old hands they  
be—

Take the bellows and puff and  
puff :  
When the steam curls rosy and free  
The broth's boiled enough.

'Then take your choice of all I  
have ;

I will give you life if you crave.  
Already I'm mildewed for the grave,  
So first myself I must drink my  
fill :

But all the rest may be yours, to  
save  
Whomever you will.'

'Done,' quoth the Prince, and the  
bargain stood.

First he piled on resinous wood,  
Next plied the bellows in hopeful  
mood ;

Thinking, 'My love and I will  
live.

If I tarry, why life is good,  
And she may forgive.'

The pot began to bubble and boil ;  
 The old man cast in essence and oil,  
 He stirred all up with a triple coil  
     Of gold and silver and iron wire,  
 Dredged in a pinch of virgin soil,  
     And fed the fire.

But still the steam curled watery  
     white ;  
 Night turned to day and day to night ;  
 One thing lacked, by his feeble sight  
     Unseen, unguessed by his feeble  
     mind :  
 Life might miss him, but Death the  
     blight  
     Was sure to find.

So when the hundredth year was full  
 The thread was cut and finished the  
     school.  
 Death snapped the old worn-out tool,  
     Snapped him short while he stood  
     and stirred  
 (Though stiff he stood as a stiff-  
     necked mule)  
     With never a word.

Thus at length the old crab was  
     nipped.  
 The dead hand slipped, the dead  
     finger dipped  
 In the broth as the dead man  
     slipped :—  
     That same instant, a rosy red  
 Flushed the steam, and quivered and  
     clipped  
     Round the dead old head.

The last ingredient was supplied  
 (Unless the dead man mistook or  
     lied).

Up started the Prince, he cast aside  
     The bellows plied through the  
     tedious trial,

Made sure that his host had died,  
     And filled a phial.

‘One night’s rest,’ thought the  
     Prince : ‘This done,  
 Forth I speed with the rising sun :  
 With the morrow I rise and run,  
     Come what will of wind or of  
     weather.  
 This draught of life, when my bride  
     is won,  
     We’ll drink together.’

Thus the dead man stayed in his  
     grave,  
 Self-chosen, the dead man in his  
     cave ;  
 There he stayed, were he fool or  
     knave,  
     Or honest seeker who had not  
     found :  
 While the Prince outside was prompt  
     to crave  
     Sleep on the ground.

‘If she watches, go bid her sleep ;  
 Bid her sleep, for the road is steep :  
 He can sleep who holdeth her cheap,  
     Sleep and wake and sleep again.  
 Let him sow, one day he shall reap,  
     Let him sow the grain.

‘When there blows a sweet garden  
     rose,  
 Let it bloom and wither if no man  
     knows :  
 But if one knows when the sweet  
     thing blows,  
     Knows, and lets it open and drop,  
 If but a nettle his garden grows  
     He hath earned the crop.’

Through his sleep the summons  
     rang,  
 Into his ears it sobbed and it sang.

Slow he woke with a drowsy pang,  
 Shook himself without much  
 debate,  
 Turned where he saw green branches  
 hang,  
 Started though late.

For the black land was travelled o'er.  
 He should see the grim land no more.  
 A flowering country stretched before  
 His face when the lovely day  
 came back :  
 He hugged the phial of Life he bore,  
 And resumed his track.

By willow courses he took his path,  
 Spied what a nest the kingfisher  
 hath,  
 Marked the fields green to after-  
 math,  
 Marked where the red-brown  
 field-mouse ran,  
 Loitered a while for a deep stream  
 bath,  
 Yawned for a fellow-man.

Up on the hills not a soul in view,  
 In the vale not many nor few ;  
 Leaves, still leaves and nothing new.  
 It's oh for a second maiden, at  
 least,  
 To bear the flagon, and taste it too,  
 And flavour the feast.

Lagging he moved, and apt to  
 swerve ;  
 Lazy of limb, but quick of nerve.  
 At length the water-bed took a curve,  
 The deep river swept its bankside  
 bare ;  
 Waters streamed from the hill-  
 reserve—  
 Waters here, waters there.

High above and deep below,  
 Bursting, bubbling, swelling the flow,  
 Like hill torrents after the snow,—  
 Bubbling, gurgling, in whirling  
 strife,  
 Swaying, sweeping to and fro,—  
 He must swim for his life.

Which way ?—which way ?—his  
 eyes grew dim  
 With the dizzying whirl—which way  
 to swim ?  
 The thunderous downshoot deafened  
 him ;  
 Half he choked in the lashing  
 spray :  
 Life is sweet, and the grave is  
 grim—  
 Which way ?—which way ?

A flash of light, a shout from the  
 strand :  
 'This way—this way ; here lies the  
 land !'  
 His phial clutched in one drowning  
 hand ;  
 He catches—misses—catches a  
 rope ;  
 His feet slip on the slipping sand :  
 Is there life ?—is there hope ?

Just saved, without pulse or breath—  
 Scarcely saved from the gulp of  
 death ;  
 Laid where a willow shadoweth—  
 Laid where a swelling turf is  
 smooth.  
 (O Bride ! but the Bridegroom  
 lingereth  
 For all thy sweet youth.)

Kind hands do and undo,  
 Kind voices whisper and coo :

'I will chafe his hands'—'And I'  
 —'And you  
 Raise his head, put his hair aside.'  
 (If many laugh, one well may rue :  
 Sleep on, thou Bride.)

So the Prince was tended with care :  
 One wrung foul ooze from his  
 clustered hair ;  
 Two chafed his hands, and did not  
 spare ;  
 But one propped his head that  
 drooped awry :  
 Till his eyes oped, and at unaware  
 They met eye to eye.

Oh a moon face in a shadowy place,  
 And a light touch and a winsome  
 grace,  
 And a thrilling tender voice which  
 says :  
 'Safe from waters that seek the  
 sea—  
 Cold waters by rugged ways—  
 Safe with me.'

While overhead bird whistles to bird,  
 And round about plays a gamesome  
 herd :  
 'Safe with us'—some take up the  
 word—  
 'Safe with us, dear lord and  
 friend :  
 All the sweeter if long deferred  
 Is rest in the end.'

Had he stayed to weigh and to scan,  
 He had been more or less than a  
 man :  
 He did what a young man can,  
 Spoke of toil and an arduous  
 way—  
 Toil to-morrow, while golden ran  
 The sands of to-day.

Slip past, slip fast,  
 Uncounted hours from first to last,  
 Many hours till the last is past,  
 Many hours dwindling to one—  
 One hour whose die is cast,  
 One last hour gone.

Come, gone—gone for ever—  
 Gone as an unreturning river—  
 Gone as to death the merriest liver—  
 Gone as the year at the dying  
 fall—  
 To - morrow, to - day, yesterday,  
 never—  
 Gone once for all.

Came at length the starting-day,  
 With last words, and last last words  
 to say,  
 With bodiless cries from far away—  
 Chiding wailing voices that rang  
 Like a trumpet-call to the tug and  
 fray ;  
 And thus they sang :

'Is there life?—the lamp burns  
 low ;  
 Is there hope?—the coming is  
 slow ;  
 The promise promised so long ago,  
 The long promise, has not been  
 kept.  
 Does she live?—does she die?—she  
 slumbers so  
 Who so oft has wept.

'Does she live!—does she die?—she  
 languisheth  
 As a lily drooping to death,  
 As a drought-worn bird with failing  
 breath,  
 As a lovely vine without a stay,  
 As a tree whereof the owner saith,  
 "Hew it down to-day."

Stung by that word, the Prince was  
fain

To start on his tedious road again.  
He crossed the stream where a ford  
was plain,

He clomb the opposite bank  
though steep,  
And swore to himself to strain and  
attain  
Ere he tasted sleep.

Huge before him a mountain frowned  
With foot of rock on the valley  
ground,

And head with snows incessant  
crowned,

And a cloud mantle about its  
strength,

And a path which the wild goat hath  
not found

In its breadth and length.

But he was strong to do and dare :

If a host had withstood him there,

He had braved a host with little care

In his lusty youth and his pride,

Tough to grapple though weak to  
snare.

He comes, O Bride.

Up he went where the goat scarce  
clings,

Up where the eagle folds her wings,

Past the green line of living things,

Where the sun cannot warm the  
cold,—

Up he went as a flame enrings  
Where there seems no hold.

Up a fissure barren and black,  
Till the eagles tired upon his track,  
And the clouds were left behind his  
back,

Up till the utmost peak was past :

Then he gasped for breath and his  
strength fell slack—  
He paused at last.

Before his face a valley spread  
Where fatness laughed, wine, oil, and  
bread,

Where all fruit-trees their sweetness  
shed,

Where all birds made love to their  
kind,

Where jewels twinkled, and gold lay  
red

And not hard to find.

Midway down the mountain side  
(On its green slope the path was  
wide)

Stood a house for a royal bride,

Built all of changing opal stone,

The royal palace, till now descried

In his dreams alone.

Less bold than in days of yore,  
Doubting now though never before,  
Doubting he goes and lags the more :

Is the time late? does the day  
grow dim?

Rose, will she open the crimson core  
Of her heart to him?

Above his head a tangle glows  
Of wine-red roses, blushes, snows,  
Closed buds and buds that unclose,  
Leaves, and moss, and prickles  
too ;

His hand shook as he plucked a rose,  
And the rose dropped dew.

Take heart of grace! the potion of  
Life

May go far to woo him a wife :

If she frown, yet a lover's strife

Lightly raised can be laid again :

A hasty word is never the knife  
To cut love in twain.

Far away stretched the royal land,  
Fed by dew, by a spice-wind fanned.  
Light labour more, and his foot  
would stand

On the threshold, all labour done ;  
Easy pleasure laid at his hand,  
And the dear Bride won.

His slackening steps pause at the  
gate—

Does she wake or sleep?—the time  
is late—

Does she sleep now, or watch and  
wait?

She has watched, she has waited  
long,

Watching athwart the golden grate  
With a patient song.

Fling the golden portals wide,  
The Bridegroom comes to his  
promised Bride :

Draw the gold-stiff curtains aside,  
Let them look on each other's  
face,

She in her meekness, he in his  
pride—

Day wears apace.

Day is over, the day that wore.

What is this that comes through the  
door,

The face covered, the feet before ?

This that coming takes his breath ;  
This Bride not seen, to be seen no  
more

Save of Bridegroom Death ?

Veiled figures carrying her  
Sweep by yet make no stir ;  
There is a smell of spice and myrrh,

A bride-chant burdened with one  
name ;

The bride-song rises steadier  
Than the torches' flame :—

' Too late for love, too late for joy,  
Too late, too late !

You loitered on the road too long,  
You trifled at the gate :

The enchanted dove upon her branch  
Died without a mate ;

The enchanted princess in her tower  
Slept, died, behind the grate ;

Her heart was starving all this while  
You made it wait.

' Ten years ago, five years ago,  
One year ago,

Even then you had arrived in time,  
Though somewhat slow ;

Then you had known her living face  
Which now you cannot know :

The frozen fountain would have  
leaped,

The buds gone on to blow,  
The warm south wind would have  
awaked

To melt the snow.

' Is she fair now as she lies ?

Once she was fair ;  
Meet queen for any kingly king,  
With gold-dust on her hair.

Now these are poppies in her locks,  
White poppies she must wear ;

Must wear a veil to shroud her face  
And the want graven there :

Or is the hunger fed at length,  
Cast off the care ?

' We never saw her with a smile  
Or with a frown ;

Her bed seemed never soft to her,  
Though tossed of down ;



She little heeded what she wore,  
 Kirtle, or wreath, or gown ;  
 We think her white brows often  
   ached  
 Beneath her crown,  
 Till silvery hairs showed in her locks  
 That used to be so brown.

'We never heard her speak in haste ;  
 Her tones were sweet,  
 And modulated just so much  
 As it was meet :  
 Her heart sat silent through the noise  
 And concourse of the street.  
 There was no hurry in her hands,  
 No hurry in her feet ;  
 There was no bliss drew nigh to her,  
 That she might run to greet.

'You should have wept her yesterday,  
 Wasting upon her bed :  
 But wherefore should you weep to-day  
 That she is dead ?  
 Lo we who love weep not to-day,  
 But crown her royal head.  
 Let be these poppies that we strew,  
 Your roses are too red :  
 Let be these poppies, not for you  
 Cut down and spread.'

11 October 1861 to March 1865.

## A ROYAL PRINCESS

I a Princess king-descended, deckt  
 with jewels, gilded, drest,  
 Would rather be a peasant with her  
 baby at her breast,  
 For all I shine so like the sun, and  
 am purple like the west.

Two and two my guards behind, two  
 and two before,  
 Two and two on either hand, they  
 guard me evermore ;

Me, poor dove that must not coo—  
 eagle that must not soar.

All my fountains cast up perfumes,  
 all my gardens grow  
 Scented woods and foreign spices,  
 with all flowers in blow  
 That are costly, out of season as the  
 seasons go.

All my walls are lost in mirrors,  
 whereupon I trace  
 Self to right hand, self to left hand,  
 self in every place,  
 Self-same solitary figure, self-same  
 seeking face.

Then I have an ivory chair high to  
 sit upon,  
 Almost like my father's chair which  
 is an ivory throne ;  
 There I sit uplift and upright, there  
 I sit alone.

Alone by day, alone by night, alone  
 days without end ;  
 My father and my mother give me  
 treasures, search and spend—  
 O my father ! O my mother ! have  
 you ne'er a friend ?

As I am a lofty princess, so my  
 father is

A lofty king, accomplished in all  
 kingly subtilties,  
 Holding in his strong right hand  
 world-kingsdoms' balances.

He has quarrelled with his neigh-  
 bours, he has scourged his foes ;  
 Vassal counts and princes follow  
 where his pennon goes,  
 Long-descended valiant lords whom  
 the vulture knows,

On whose track the vulture swoops,  
 when they ride in state  
 To break the strength of armies and  
 topple down the great :  
 Each of these my courteous servant,  
 none of these my mate.

My father counting up his strength  
 sets down with equal pen  
 So many head of cattle, head of  
 horses, head of men ;  
 These for slaughter, these for labour,  
 with the how and when.

Some to work on roads, canals; some  
 to man his ships ;  
 Some to smart in mines beneath  
 sharp overseers' whips ;  
 Some to trap fur-beasts in lands  
 where utmost winter nips.

Once it came into my heart, and  
 whelmed me like a flood,  
 That these too are men and women,  
 human flesh and blood ;  
 Men with hearts and men with souls,  
 though trodden down like mud.

Our feasting was not glad that night,  
 our music was not gay ;  
 On my mother's graceful head I  
 marked a thread of grey,  
 My father frowning at the fare  
 seemed every dish to weigh.

I sat beside them sole princess in my  
 exalted place,  
 My ladies and my gentlemen stood  
 by me on the dais :  
 A mirror showed me I look old and  
 haggard in the face ;

It showed me that my ladies all are  
 fair to gaze upon,

Plump, plenteous-haired, to every  
 one love's secret lore is known,  
 They laugh by day, they sleep by  
 night ; ah me, what is a throne ?

The singing men and women sang  
 that night as usual,  
 The dancers danced in pairs and sets,  
 but music had a fall,  
 A melancholy windy fall as at a  
 funeral.

Amid the toss of torches to my  
 chamber back we swept ;  
 My ladies loosed my golden chain ;  
 meantime I could have wept  
 To think of some in galling chains  
 whether they waked or slept.

I took my bath of scented milk,  
 delicately waited on :  
 They burned sweet things for my  
 delight, cedar and cinnamon,  
 They lit my shaded silver lamp, and  
 left me there alone.

A day went by, a week went by. One  
 day I heard it said :  
 ' Men are clamouring, women,  
 children, clamouring to be fed ;  
 Men like famished dogs are howling  
 in the streets for bread.'

So two whispered by my door, not  
 thinking I could hear,  
 Vulgar naked truth, ungarnished for  
 a royal ear ;  
 Fit for cooping in the background,  
 not to stalk so near.

But I strained my utmost sense to  
 catch this truth, and mark :  
 ' There are families out grazing, like  
 cattle in the park.'

'A pair of peasants must be saved,  
even if we build an ark.'

A merry jest, a merry laugh : each  
strolled upon his way ;

One was my page, a lad I reared and  
bore with day by day ;

One was my youngest maid, as sweet  
and white as cream in May.

Other footsteps followed softly with  
a weightier tramp ;

Voices said : 'Picked soldiers have  
been summoned from the camp,

To quell these base-born ruffians who  
make free to howl and stamp.'

'Howl and stamp?' one answered :  
'They made free to hurl a stone

At the minister's state coach, well  
aimed and stoutly thrown.'

'There's work then for the soldiers, for  
this rank crop must be mown.'

'One I saw, a poor old fool with  
ashes on his head,

Whimpering because a girl had  
snatched his crust of bread :

Then he dropped ; when some one  
raised him, it turned out he was  
dead.'

'After us the deluge,' was retorted  
'with a laugh :

'If bread's the staff of life they must  
walk without a staff.'

'While I've a loaf they're welcome  
to my blessing and the chaff.'

These passed. 'The king' : stand  
up. Said my father with a  
smile :

'Daughter mine, your mother comes  
to sit with you awhile ;

She's sad to-day, and who but you  
her sadness can beguile ?'

He too left me. Shall I touch my  
harp now while I wait,—

(I hear them doubling guard below  
before our palace gate)—

Or shall I work the last gold stitch  
into my veil of state ;

Or shall my woman stand and read  
some unimpassioned scene,—

There's music of a lulling sort in  
words that pause between ;

Or shall she merely fan me while I  
wait here for the queen ?

Again I caught my father's voice in  
sharp word of command :

'Charge' a clash of steel : 'Charge  
again, the rebels stand.

Smite and spare not, hand to hand ;  
smite and spare not, hand to  
hand.'

There swelled a tumult at the gate,  
high voices waxing higher ;

A flash of red reflected light lit the  
cathedral spire ;

I heard a cry for faggots, then I  
heard a yell for fire.

'Sit and roast there with your meat,  
sit and bake there with your  
bread,

You who sat to see us starve,' one  
shrieking woman said :

'Sit on your throne and roast with  
your crown upon your head.'

Nay, this thing will I do, while my  
mother tarrieth,

I will take my fine spun gold, but  
not to sew therewith,

I will take my gold and gems, and  
rainbow fan and wreath ;

With a ransom in my lap, a king's  
ransom in my hand,  
I will go down to this people, will  
stand face to face, will stand  
Where they curse king, queen, and  
princess of this cursed land.

They shall take all to buy them  
bread, take all I have to give ;  
I, if I perish, perish ; they to-day  
shall eat and live ;  
I, if I perish, perish—that's the  
goal I half conceive :

Once to speak before the world, rend  
bare my heart, and show  
The lesson I have learned, which is  
death, is life, to know.  
I, if I perish, perish : in the name  
of God I go :

22 October 1861.

### MAIDEN-SONG

LONG ago and long ago  
And long ago still,  
There dwelt three merry maidens  
Upon a distant hill.  
One was tall Meggan,  
And one was dainty May,  
But one was fair Margaret,  
More fair than I can say,  
Long ago and long ago.

When Meggan pluckt the thorny  
rose,  
And when May pulled the brier,  
Half the birds would swoop to see,  
Half the beasts drew nigher,

Half the fishes of the streams  
Would dart up to admire.  
But, when Margaret pluckt a flag-  
flower  
Or poppy hot aflame,  
All the beasts and all the birds  
And all the fishes came  
To her hand more soft than snow.

Strawberry leaves and May-dew  
In brisk morning air,  
Strawberry leaves and May-dew  
Make maidens fair.  
'I go for strawberry leaves,'  
Meggan said one day :  
'Fair Margaret can bide at home,  
But you come with me, May :  
Up the hill and down the hill,  
Along the winding way  
You and I are used to go.'

So these two fair sisters  
Went with innocent will  
Up the hill and down again,  
And round the homestead hill :  
While the fairest sat at home,  
Margaret like a queen,  
Like a blush-rose, like the moon  
In her heavenly sheen,  
Fragrant-breathed as milky cow  
Or field of blossoming bean,  
Graceful as an ivy bough  
Born to cling and lean ;  
Thus she sat to sing and sew.

When she raised her lustrous eyes  
A beast peeped at the door ;  
When she downward cast her eyes  
A fish gasped on the floor ;  
When she turned away her eyes  
A bird perched on the sill,  
Warbling out its heart of love,  
Warbling warbling still,  
With pathetic pleadings low.

Light-foot May with Meggan  
 Sought the choicest spot,  
 Clothed with thyme-alternate grass :  
 Then, while day waxed hot,  
 Sat at ease to play and rest,  
 A gracious rest and play ;  
 The loveliest maidens near or far,  
 When Margaret was away,  
 Who sat at home to sing and sew.

Sun-glow flushed their comely cheeks,  
 Wind-play tossed their hair,  
 Creeping things among the grass  
 Stroked them here and there ;  
 Meggan piped a merry note,  
 A fitful wayward lay  
 While shrill as bird on topmost  
 twig

Piped merry May ;  
 Honey-smooth the double flow.

Sped a herdsman from the vale,  
 Mounting like a flame ;  
 All on fire to hear and see,  
 With floating locks he came.  
 Looked neither north nor south,  
 Neither east nor west,  
 But sat him down at Meggan's feet  
 As love-bird on his nest,  
 And wooed her with a silent awe,  
 With trouble not expressed ;  
 She sang the tears into his eyes,  
 The heart out of his breast :  
 So he loved her, listening so.

She sang the heart out of his  
 breast,

The words out of his tongue ;  
 Hand and foot and pulse he paused  
 Till her song was sung.

Then he spoke up from his place  
 Simple words and true :

' Scanty goods have I to give,  
 Scanty skill to woo ;

But I have a will to work,  
 And a heart for you :  
 Bid me stay or bid me go.'

Then Meggan mused within herself :  
 ' Better be first with him  
 Than dwell where fairer Margaret  
 sits,

Who shines my brightness dim,  
 For ever second where she sits,  
 However fair I be :

I will be lady of his love,  
 And he shall worship me ;  
 I will be lady of his herds  
 And stoop to his degree,  
 At home where kids and fatlings  
 grow.'

Sped a shepherd from the height  
 Headlong down to look,  
 (White lambs followed, lured by love  
 Of their shepherd's crook) :  
 He turned neither east nor west,  
 Neither north nor south,  
 But knelt right down to May, for love  
 Of her sweet-singing mouth ;  
 Forgot his flocks, his panting flocks  
 In parching hill-side drouth ;  
 Forgot himself for weal or woe.

Trilled her song and swelled her  
 song

With maiden coy caprice  
 In a labyrinth of throbs,  
 Pauses, cadences ;

Clear-noted as a dropping brook,  
 Soft-noted like the bees,  
 Wild-noted as the shivering wind

Forlorn through forest-trees :  
 Love-noted like the wood-pigeon

Who hides herself for love,  
 Yet cannot keep her secret safe,  
 But coos and coos thereof :

Thus the notes rang loud or low.

He hung breathless on her breath ;  
 Speechless, who listened well ;  
 Could not speak or think or wish  
 Till silence broke the spell.  
 Then he spoke, and spread his  
   hands,  
   Pointing here and there :  
 ' See my sheep and see the lambs,  
   Twin lambs which they bare.  
 All myself I offer you,  
   All my flocks and care,  
 Your sweet song hath moved me so.'

In her fluttered heart young May  
 Mused a dubious while :  
 ' If he loves me as he says '—  
   Her lips curved with a smile :  
 ' Where Margaret shines like the  
   sun  
   I shine but like a moon ;  
 If sister Meggan makes her choice  
   I can make mine as soon ;  
 At cockcrow we were sister-maids,  
   We may be brides at noon.'  
 Said Meggan ' Yes ' ; May said not  
   ' No.'

Fair Margaret stayed alone at home ;  
 Awhile she sang her song,  
 Awhile sat silent, then she thought  
   ' My sisters loiter long.'  
 That sultry noon had waned away,  
 Shadows had waxen great :  
 ' Surely,' she thought within herself,  
   ' My sisters loiter late.'  
 She rose, and peered out at the  
   door,  
   With patient heart to wait,  
 And heard a distant nightingale  
   Complaining of its mate ;  
 Then down the garden slope she  
   walked,  
   Down to the garden gate,  
 Leaned on the rail and waited so.

The slope was lightened by her eyes  
   Like summer lightning fair,  
 Like rising of the haloed moon  
   Lightened her glimmering hair,  
 While her face lightened like the sun  
   Whose dawn is rosy white.  
 Thus crowned with maiden majesty  
   She peered into the night,  
 Looked up the hill and down the hill,  
   To left hand and to right,  
 Flashing like fire-flies to and fro.

Waiting thus in weariness  
   She marked the nightingale  
 Telling, if any one would heed,  
   Its old complaining tale.  
 Then lifted she her voice and sang,  
   Answering the bird :  
 Then lifted she her voice and sang ;  
   Such notes were never heard  
 From any bird when Spring's in  
   blow.

The king of all that country,  
   Coursing far, coursing near,  
 Curbed his amber-bitted steed,  
   Coursed amain to hear ;  
 All his princes in his train,  
   Squire and knight and peer,  
 With his crown upon his head,  
   His sceptre in his hand,  
 Down he fell at Margaret's knees  
   Lord king of all that land,  
 To her highness bending low.

Every beast and bird and fish  
   Came mustering to the sound,  
 Every man and every maid  
   From miles of country round :  
 Meggan on her herdsman's arm,  
   With her shepherd May,  
 Flocks and herds trooped at their  
   heels  
 Along the hill-side way ;



No foot too feeble for the ascent,  
Not any head too grey ;  
Some were swift and none were slow.

So Margaret sang her sisters home  
In their marriage mirth ;  
Sang free birds out of the sky,  
Beasts along the earth,  
Sang up fishes of the deep—  
All breathing things that move—  
Sang from far and sang from near  
To her lovely love ;  
Sang together friend and foe ;

Sang a golden-bearded king  
Straightway to her feet,  
Sang him silent where he knelt  
In eager anguish sweet.  
But when the clear voice died away,  
When longest echoes died,  
He stood up like a royal man  
And claimed her for his bride.  
So three maids were wooed and won

In a brief May-tide,  
Long ago and long ago.

6 July 1863.

### 'THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN'

OH the rose of keenest thorn !  
One hidden summer morn  
Under the rose I was born.

I do not guess his name  
Who wrought my Mother's shame,  
And gave me life forlorn ;  
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,  
I know her from all other.  
My Mother pale and mild,  
Fair as ever was seen,

She was but scarce sixteen,  
Little more than a child,  
When I was born  
To work her scorn.  
With secret bitter throes,  
In a passion of secret woes,  
She bore me under the rose.

One who my Mother nursed  
Took me from the first :—  
'O nurse, let me look upon  
This babe that costs so dear ;  
To-morrow she will be gone :  
Other mothers may keep  
Their babes awake and asleep,  
But I must not keep her here.'—  
Whether I know or guess,  
I know this not the less.

So I was sent away  
That none might spy the truth :  
And my childhood waxed to youth  
And I left off childish play.  
I never cared to play  
With the village boys and girls ;  
And I think they thought me proud,  
I found so little to say  
And kept so from the crowd :  
But I had the longest curls  
And I had the largest eyes,  
And my teeth were small like pearls.  
The girls might flout and scout me,  
But the boys would hang about me,  
In sheepish mooning wise.

Our one-street village stood  
A long mile from the town,  
A mile of windy down  
And bleak one-sided wood,  
With not a single house.  
Our town itself was small,  
With just the common shops,  
And throve in its small way.  
Our neighbouring gentry reared

The good old-fashioned crops,  
And made old-fashioned boasts  
Of what John Bull would do  
If Frenchman Frog appeared,  
And drank old-fashioned toasts,  
And made old-fashioned bows  
To my Lady at the Hall.

My Lady at the Hall  
Is grander than they all :  
Hers is the oldest name  
In all the neighbourhood ;  
But the race must die with her  
Though she's a lofty dame,  
For she's unmarried still.  
Poor people say she's good,  
And has an open hand  
As any in the land,  
And she's the comforter  
Of many sick and sad ;  
My nurse once said to me  
That everything she had  
Came of my Lady's bounty :  
'Though she's greatest in the county  
She's humble to the poor,—  
No beggar seeks her door  
But finds help presently.  
I pray both night and day  
For her, and you must pray :  
But she'll never feel distress  
If needy folk can bless.'

I was a little maid  
When here we came to live  
From somewhere by the sea.  
Men spoke a foreign tongue  
There where we used to be  
When I was merry and young,  
Too young to feel afraid ;  
The fisher folk would give  
A kind strange word to me,  
There by the foreign sea :  
I don't know where it was,  
But I remember still

Our cottage on a hill,  
And fields of flowering grass  
On that fair foreign shore.

I liked my old home best,  
But this was pleasant too :  
So here we made our nest  
And here I grew.  
And now and then my Lady  
In riding past our door  
Would nod to Nurse and speak,  
Or stoop and pat my cheek ;  
And I was always ready  
To hold the field-gate wide  
For my Lady to go through ;  
My Lady in her veil  
So seldom put aside,  
My Lady grave and pale.

I often sat to wonder  
Who might my parents be,  
For I knew of something under  
My simple-seeming state.  
Nurse never talked to me  
Of mother or of father,  
But watched me early and late  
With kind suspicious cares :  
Or not suspicious, rather  
Anxious, as if she knew  
Some secret I might gather  
And smart for unawares.  
Thus I grew.

But Nurse waxed old and grey,  
Bent and weak with years.  
There came a certain day  
That she lay upon her bed,  
Shaking her palsied head,  
With words she gasped to say  
Which had to stay unsaid.  
Then with a jerking hand  
Held out so piteously  
She gave a ring to me  
Of gold wrought curiously,—

A ring which she had worn  
 Since the day that I was born,  
 She once had said to me.  
 I slipped it on my finger ;  
 Her eyes were keen to linger  
 On my hand that slipped it on ;  
 Then she sighed one rattling sigh  
 And stared on with sightless eye :—  
 The one who loved me was gone.

How long I stayed alone  
 With the corpse I never knew,  
 For I fainted dead as stone.  
 When I came to life once more  
 I was down upon the floor,  
 With neighbours making ado  
 To bring me back to life.  
 I heard the sexton's wife  
 Say : ' Up, my lad, and run  
 To tell it at the Hall ;  
 She was my Lady's nurse,  
 And done can't be undone :  
 I'll watch by this poor lamb.  
 I guess my Lady's purse  
 Is always open to such :  
 I'd run up on my crutch  
 A cripple as I am,'  
 (For cramps had vexed her much)  
 ' Rather than this dear heart  
 Lack one to take her part.'

For days day after day  
 On my weary bed I lay  
 Wishing the time would pass ;  
 Oh so wishing that I was  
 Likely to pass away :  
 For the one friend whom I knew  
 Was dead, I knew no other,  
 Neither father nor mother ;  
 And I, what should I do ?

One day the sexton's wife  
 Said : ' Rouse yourself, my dear :  
 My Lady has driven down

From the Hall into the town,  
 And we think she's coming here.  
 Cheer up, for life is life.'

But I would not look or speak,  
 Would not cheer up at all.  
 My tears were like to fall ;  
 So I turned round to the wall  
 And hid my hollow cheek,  
 Making as if I slept,  
 As silent as a stone,  
 And no one knew I wept.  
 What was my Lady to me,  
 The grand lady from the Hall ?  
 She might come, or stay away,  
 I was sick at heart that day :  
 The whole world seemed to be  
 Nothing, just nothing to me,  
 For aught that I could see.

Yet I listened where I lay.  
 A bustle came below,  
 A clear voice said : ' I know :  
 I will see her first alone,  
 It may be less of a shock  
 If she's so weak to-day.'—  
 A light hand turned the lock,  
 A light step crossed the floor,  
 One sat beside my bed :  
 But never a word she said.

For me, my shyness grew  
 Each moment more and more :  
 So I said never a word,  
 And neither looked nor stirred ;  
 I think she must have heard  
 My heart go pit-a-pat :  
 Thus I lay, my Lady sat,  
 More than a mortal hour—  
 (I counted one and two  
 By the house-clock while I lay) :  
 I seemed to have no power  
 To think of a thing to say,

Or do what I ought to do,  
Or rouse myself to a choice.

At last she said : ' Margaret,  
Won't you even look at me ? '  
A something in her voice  
Forced my tears to fall at last,  
Forced sobs from me thick and fast ;  
Something not of the past,  
Yet stirring memory ;  
A something new, and yet  
Not new, too sweet to last,  
Which I never can forget.

I turned and stared at her :  
Her cheek showed hollow-pale ;  
Her hair like mine was fair,  
A wonderful fall of hair  
That screened her like a veil ;  
But her height was statelier,  
Her eyes had depth more deep :  
I think they must have had  
Always a something sad,  
Unless they were asleep.

While I stared, my Lady took  
My hand in her spare hand  
Jewelled and soft and grand,  
And looked with a long long look  
Of hunger in my face ;  
As if she tried to trace  
Features she ought to know,  
And half hoped, half feared, to find.  
Whatever was in her mind,  
She heaved a sigh at last,  
And began to talk to me.

' Your nurse was my dear nurse,  
And her nursling's dear,' said she :  
' No one told me a word  
Of her getting worse and worse,  
Till her poor life was past '  
(Here my Lady's tears dropped fast).  
' I might have been with her,  
I might have promised and heard,

But she had no comforter.  
She might have told me much  
Which now I shall never know,  
Never never shall know.'  
She sat by me sobbing so,  
And seemed so woe-begone,  
That I laid one hand upon  
Hers with a timid touch,  
Scarce thinking what I did,  
Not knowing what to say :  
That moment her face was hid  
In the pillow close by mine,  
Her arm was flung over me,  
She hugged me, sobbing so  
As if her heart would break,  
And kissed me where I lay.

After this she often came  
To bring me fruit or wine  
Or sometimes hothouse flowers ;  
And at nights I lay awake  
Often and often thinking  
What to do for her sake.  
Wet or dry it was the same :  
She would come in at all hours,  
Set me eating and drinking  
And say I must grow strong ;  
At last the day seemed long,  
And home seemed scarcely home,  
If she did not come.

Well, I grew strong again :  
In time of primroses,  
I went to pluck them in the lane ;  
In time of nestling birds,  
I heard them chirping round the  
house ;  
And all the herds  
Were out at grass when I grew strong,  
And days were waxen long,  
And there was work for bees  
Among the May-bush boughs,  
And I had shot up tall,  
And life felt after all

Pleasant, and not so long,  
When I grew strong.

I was going to the Hall  
To be my Lady's maid :  
'Her little friend,' she said to me,  
'Almost her child,'  
She said and smiled,  
Sighing painfully ;  
Blushing, with a second flush  
As if she blushed to blush.

Friend, servant, child : just this  
My standing at the Hall ;  
The other servants call me 'Miss,'  
My Lady calls me 'Margaret,'  
With her clear voice musical.  
She never chides when I forget  
This or that ; she never chides.  
Except when people come to stay  
(And that's not often) at the Hall,  
I sit with her all day  
And ride out when she rides.  
She sings to me and makes me sing ;  
Sometimes I read to her,  
Sometime we merely sit and talk.  
She noticed once my ring  
And made me tell its history ;  
That evening in our garden walk  
She said she should infer  
The ring had been my father's first,  
Then my mother's, given for me  
To the nurse who nursed  
My mother in her misery,  
That so quite certainly  
Some one might know me, who . . .  
Then she was silent, and I too.

I hate when people come :  
The women speak and stare  
And mean to be so civil.  
This one will stroke my hair,  
That one will pat my cheek  
And praise my Lady's kindness,  
Expecting me to speak ;

I like the proud ones best  
Who sit as struck with blindness,  
As if I wasn't there.  
But if any gentleman  
Is staying at the Hall  
(Though few come prying here),  
My Lady seems to fear  
Some downright dreadful evil,  
And makes me keep my room  
As closely as she can :  
So I hate when people come,  
It is so troublesome.  
In spite of all her care,  
Sometimes to keep alive  
I sometimes do contrive  
To get out in the grounds  
For a whiff of wholesome air,  
Under the rose you know :  
It's charming to break bounds,  
Stolen waters are sweet,  
And what's the good of feet  
If for days they mustn't go ?  
Give me a longer tether,  
Or I may break from it.

Now I have eyes and ears,  
And just some little wit.  
'Almost my Lady's child ;'  
I recollect she smiled,  
Sighed and blushed together.  
Then her story of the ring  
Sounds not improbable ;  
She told it me so well  
It seemed the actual thing.—  
Oh keep your counsel close :  
But I guess under the rose,  
In long past summer weather  
When the world was blossoming  
And the rose upon its thorn—  
I guess not who he was  
Flawed honour like a glass,  
And made my life forlorn ;  
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,  
Oh I know her from all other.

My Lady, you might trust  
 Your daughter with your fame.  
 Trust me, I would not shame  
 Our honourable name,  
 For I have noble blood  
 Though I was bred in dust  
 And brought up in the mud.  
 I will not press my claim,  
 Just leave me where you will :  
 But you might trust your daughter,  
 For blood is thicker than water  
 And you're my mother still.

So my Lady holds her own  
 With condescending grace,  
 And fills her lofty place  
 With an untroubled face  
 As a queen may fill a throne.  
 While I could hint a tale—  
 (But then I am her child)—  
 Would make her quail ;  
 Would set her in the dust,  
 Lorn with no comforter,  
 Her glorious hair defiled  
 And ashes on her cheek :  
 The decent world would thrust  
 Its finger out at her,  
 Not much displeased I think  
 To make a nine days' stir ;  
 The decent world would sink  
 Its voice to speak of her.

Now this is what I mean  
 To do, no more, no less :  
 Never to speak, or show  
 Bare sign of what I know.  
 Let the blot pass unseen ;  
 Yea, let her never guess  
 I hold the tangled clue  
 She huddles out of view.  
 Friend, servant, almost child—  
 So be it and nothing more  
 On this side of the grave.

Mother, in Paradise  
 You'll see with clearer eyes ;  
 Perhaps in this world even  
 When you are like to die  
 And face to face with Heaven  
 You'll drop for once the lie :  
 But you must drop the mask, not I

My Lady promises  
 Two hundred pounds with me  
 Whenever I may wed  
 A man she can approve :  
 And since besides her bounty  
 I'm fairest in the county  
 (For so I've heard it said,  
 Though I don't vouch for this),  
 Her promised pounds may move  
 Some honest man to see  
 My virtues and my beauties ;  
 Perhaps the rising grazier,  
 Or temperance publican,  
 May claim my wifely duties.  
 Meanwhile I wait their leisure  
 And grace-bestowing pleasure,  
 I wait the happy man ;  
 But if I hold my head  
 And pitch my expectations  
 Just higher than their level,  
 They must fall back on patience.  
 I may not mean to wed,  
 Yet I'll be civil.

Now sometimes in a dream  
 My heart goes out of me  
 To build and scheme,  
 Till I sob after things that seem  
 So pleasant in a dream :  
 A home such as I see  
 My blessed neighbours live in  
 With father and with mother,  
 All proud of one another,  
 Named by one common name  
 From baby in the bud  
 To full-blown workman Father ;



It's little short of Heaven.  
 I'd give my gentle blood  
 To wash my special shame  
 And drown my private grudge.  
 I'd toil and moil much rather,  
 The dingiest cottage drudge  
 Whose mother need not blush,  
 Than live here like a lady  
 And see my Mother flush  
 And hear her voice unsteady  
 Sometimes, yet never dare  
 Ask to share her care.

Of course the servants sneer  
 Behind my back at me ;  
 Of course the village girls,  
 Who envy me my curls  
 And gowns and idleness,  
 Take comfort in a jeer ;  
 Of course the ladies guess  
 Just so much of my history  
 As points the emphatic stress  
 With which they laud my Lady.  
 The gentlemen who catch  
 A casual glimpse of me  
 And turn again to see,  
 Their valets on the watch  
 To speak a word with me,  
 All know and sting me wild ;  
 Till I am almost ready  
 To wish that I were dead—  
 No faces more to see,  
 No more words to be said,  
 My Mother safe at last  
 Disburdened of her child,  
 And the past past.

'All equal before God'—  
 Our Rector has it so,  
 And sundry sleepers nod.  
 It may be so ; I know  
 All are not equal here,  
 And when the sleepers wake  
 They make a difference.

'All equal in the grave'—  
 That shows an obvious sense :  
 Yet something which I crave  
 Not death itself brings near ;  
 How should death half atone  
 For all my past, or make  
 The name I bear my own ?

I love my dear old Nurse  
 Who loved me without gains ;  
 I love my mistress even,  
 Friend, Mother, what you will.  
 But I could almost curse  
 My Father for his pains ;  
 And sometimes at my prayer  
 Kneeling in sight of Heaven  
 I almost curse him still :  
 Why did he set his snare  
 To catch at unaware  
 My Mother's foolish youth,—  
 Load me with shame that's hers,  
 And her with something worse,  
 A lifelong lie for truth ?

I think my mind is fixed  
 On one point and made up :  
 To accept my lot unmixed ;  
 Never to drug the cup  
 But drink it by myself.  
 I'll not be wooed for pelf ;  
 I'll not blot out my shame  
 With any man's good name ;  
 But nameless as I stand,  
 My hand is my own hand,  
 And nameless as I came  
 I go to the dark land.

'All equal in the grave'—  
 I bide my time till then :  
 'All equal before God'—  
 To-day I feel His rod,  
 To-morrow He may save.  
Amen.

March 1865.

THE MONTHS :  
A PAGEANT.  
PERSONIFICATIONS.

<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>
JANUARY.	FEBRUARY.
MARCH.	APRIL.
JULY.	MAY.
AUGUST.	JUNE.
OCTOBER.	SEPTEMBER.
DECEMBER.	NOVEMBER.

ROBIN REDBREASTS; LAMBS AND SHEEP;  
NIGHTINGALE AND NESTLINGS.

Various Flowers, Fruits, etc.

*Scene*: A COTTAGE WITH ITS GROUNDS.

[A room in a large comfortable cottage; a fire burning on the hearth; a table on which the breakfast things have been left standing. January discovered seated by the fire.]

JANUARY.

COLD the day and cold the drifted  
snow,

Dim the day until the cold dark  
night.

[Stirs the fire.

Crackle, sparkle, faggot; embers  
glow:

Some one may be plodding through  
the snow

Longing for a light,

For the light that you and I can show.

If no one else should come,

Here Robin Redbreast's welcome to  
a crumb,

And never troublesome:

Robin, why don't you come and fetch  
your crumb?

Here's butter for my hunch of bread,

And sugar for your crumb;

Here's room upon the hearthrug,

If you'll only come.

In your scarlet waistcoat,  
With your keen bright eye,  
Where are you loitering?  
Wings were made to fly!

Make haste to breakfast,  
Come and fetch your crumb,  
For I'm as glad to see you  
As you are glad to come.

[Two Robin Redbreasts are seen tapping with their beaks at the lattice, which January opens. The birds flutter in, hop about the floor, and peck up the crumbs and sugar thrown to them. They have scarcely finished their meal when a knock is heard at the door. January hangs a guard in front of the fire, and opens to February, who appears with a bunch of snowdrops in her hand.]

Good-morrow, sister.

FEBRUARY.

Brother, joy to you!

I've brought some snowdrops; only  
just a few,

But quite enough to prove the world  
awake,

Cheerful and hopeful in the frosty  
dew

And for the pale sun's sake.

[She hands a few of her snowdrops to January, who retires into the background. While February stands arranging the remaining snowdrops in a glass of water on the window-sill, a soft butting and bleating are heard outside. She opens the door, and sees one foremost lamb, with other sheep and lambs bleating and crowding towards her.]

O you, you little wonder, come—  
come in,

You wonderful, you woolly soft white  
lamb:

You panting mother ewe, come too,  
And lead that tottering twin  
Safe in :  
Bring all your bleating kith and kin,  
Except the horny ram.

[February opens a second door in the back-ground, and the little flock files through into a warm and sheltered compartment out of sight.]

The lambkin tottering in its walk  
With just a fleece to wear ;  
The snowdrop drooping on its stalk  
So slender,—  
Snowdrop and lamb, a pretty pair,  
Braving the cold for our delight,  
Both white,  
Both tender.

[A rattling of doors and windows ; branches seen without, tossing violently to and fro.]

How the doors rattle, and the branches  
sway !  
Here's brother March comes whirling  
on his way  
With winds that eddy and sing :—

[She turns the handle of the door, which bursts open, and discloses March hastening up, both hands full of violets and anemones.]

Come, show me what you bring ;  
For I have said my say, fulfilled my  
day,  
And must away.

### MARCH

[Stopping short on the threshold.]

I blow an arouse  
Through the world's wide house  
To quicken the torpid earth :  
Grappling I fling  
Each feeble thing,  
But bring strong life to the birth.

R

I wrestle and frown,  
And topple down ;  
I wrench, I rend, I uproot ;  
Yet the violet  
Is born where I set  
The sole of my flying foot,

[Hands violets and anemones to February, who retires into the background.]

And in my wake  
Frail wind-flowers quake,  
And the catkins promise fruit.  
I drive ocean ashore  
With rush and roar,  
And he cannot say me nay :  
My harpstrings all  
Are the forests tall,  
Making music when I play.  
And as others perforce,  
So I on my course  
Run and needs must run,  
With sap on the mount  
And buds past count  
And rivers and clouds and sun,  
With seasons and breath  
And time and death  
And all that has yet begun.

[Before March has done speaking, a voice is heard approaching accompanied by a twittering of birds. April comes along singing, and stands outside and out of sight to finish her song.]

### APRIL

[Outside.]

Pretty little three  
Sparrows in a tree,  
Light upon the wing ;  
Though you cannot sing  
You can chirp of Spring :  
Chirp of Spring to me,  
Sparrows, from your tree.

E

Never mind the showers,  
 Chirp about the flowers  
 While you build a nest :  
 Straws from east and west,  
 Feathers from your breast,  
 Make the snuggest bowers  
 In a world of flowers.

You must dart away  
 From the chosen spray,  
 You intrusive third  
 Extra little bird ;  
 Join the unwedded herd !  
 These have done with play,  
 And must work to-day.

[Appearing at the open door.]

Good-morrow and good-bye : if  
 others fly,  
 Of all the flying months you're the  
 most flying.

### MARCH.

You're hope and sweetness, April.

### APRIL.

Birth means dying,  
 As wings and wind mean flying ;  
 So you and I and all things fly or  
 die ;  
 And sometimes I sit sighing to think  
 of dying.  
 But meanwhile I've a rainbow in my  
 showers,  
 And a lapful of flowers,  
 And these dear nestlings aged three  
 hours ;  
 And here's their mother sitting ;  
 Their father's merely flitting  
 To find their breakfast somewhere  
 in my bowers.

[As she speaks April shows March her  
 apron full of flowers and nest full of  
 birds. March wanders away into the  
 grounds. April, without entering the  
 cottage, hangs over the hungry nestlings  
 watching them.]

What beaks you have, you funny  
 things,

What voices shrill and weak ;  
 Who'd think that anything that sings  
 Could sing through such a beak ?  
 Yet you'll be nightingales one day,  
 And charm the country side,  
 When I'm away and far away  
 And May is queen and bride.

[May arrives unperceived by April, and  
 gives her a kiss. April starts and looks  
 round.]

Ah May, good-morrow, May, and so  
 good-bye.

### MAY.

That's just your way, sweet April,  
 smile and sigh :  
 Your sorrow's half in fun,  
 Begun and done  
 And turned to joy while twenty  
 seconds run.  
 I've gathered flowers all as I came  
 along,  
 At every step a flower  
 Fed by your last bright shower,—

[She divides an armful of all sorts of flowers  
 with April, who strolls away through the  
 garden.]

And gathering flowers I listened to  
 the song  
 Of every bird in bower.

The world and I are far too full  
 of bliss

To think or plan or toil or care ;  
 The sun is waxing strong,  
 The days are waxing long,  
 And all that is  
 Is fair.

Here are my buds of lily and of  
 rose,  
 And here's my namesake blossom  
 may ;  
 And from a watery spot  
 See here forget-me-not,  
 With all that blows  
 To-day.

Hark to my linnets from the hedges  
 green,  
 Blackbird and lark and thrush  
 and dove,  
 And every nightingale  
 And cuckoo tells its tale,  
 And all they mean  
 Is love.

[June appears at the further end of the  
 garden, coming slowly towards May,  
 who, seeing her, exclaims]

Surely you're come too early, sister  
 June.

#### JUNE.

Indeed I feel as if I came too soon  
 To round your young May moon  
 And set the world a-gasping at my  
 noon.

Yet come I must. So here are  
 strawberries

Sun-flushed and sweet, as many as  
 you please ;

And here are full-blown roses by the  
 score,

More roses, and yet more.

[May, eating strawberries, withdraws  
 among the flower beds.]

The sun does all my long day's work  
 for me,  
 Raises and ripens everything ;  
 I need but sit beneath a leafy tree  
 And watch and sing.

[Seats herself in the shadow of a laburnum.]

Or if I'm lulled by note of bird and  
 bee,

Or lulled by noontide's silence  
 deep,

I need but nestle down beneath my  
 tree

And drop asleep.

[June falls asleep ; and is not awakened  
 by the voice of July, who behind the  
 scenes is heard half singing, half calling.]

#### JULY

[Behind the scenes.]

Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all  
 freckled,

Which will you take ? yellow, blue,  
 speckled !

Take which you will, speckled, blue,  
 yellow,

Each in its way has not a fellow.

[Enter July, a basket of many-coloured  
 irises slung upon his shoulders, a bunch  
 of ripe grass in one hand, and a plate  
 piled full of peaches balanced upon the  
 other. He steals up to June, and tickles  
 her with the grass. She wakes.]

#### JUNE.

What, here already ?

#### JULY.

Nay, my tryst is kept ;

The longest day slipped by you while  
 you slept.

I've brought you one curved pyramid  
 of bloom,

[Hands her the plate.]

Not flowers but peaches, gathered  
 where the bees,  
 As downy, bask and boom  
 In sunshine and in gloom of trees.  
 But get you in, a storm is at my  
 heels;

The whirlwind whistles and wheels,  
 Lightning flashes and thunder peals,  
 Flying and following hard upon my  
 heels.

[June takes shelter in a thickly-woven  
 arbour.]

The roar of a storm sweeps up  
 From the east to the lurid west,  
 The darkening sky, like a cup,  
 Is filled with rain to the brink;  
 The sky is purple and fire,  
 Blackness and noise and unrest;  
 The earth, parched with desire,  
 Opens her mouth to drink.

Send forth thy thunder and fire,  
 Turn over thy brimming cup,  
 O sky, appease the desire  
 Of earth in her parched unrest;  
 Pour out drink to her thirst,  
 Her famishing life lift up;  
 Make thyself fair as at first,  
 With a rainbow for thy crest:

Have done with thunder and fire,  
 O sky with the rainbow crest;  
 O earth, have done with desire,  
 Drink, and drink deep, and rest.

[Enter August, carrying a sheaf made up  
 of different kinds of grain.]

Hail, brother August, flushed and  
 warm

And scatheless from my storm.  
 Your hands are full of corn, I see,  
 As full as hands can be:

And earth and air both smell as  
 sweet as balm  
 In their recovered calm,  
 And that they owe to me.

[July retires into a shrubbery.]

## AUGUST.

Wheat sways heavy, oats are airy,  
 Barley bows a graceful head,  
 Short and small shoots up canary,  
 Each of these is some one's bread;  
 Bread for man or bread for beast,  
 Or at very least  
 A bird's savoury feast.

Men are brethren of each other,  
 One in flesh and one in food;  
 And a sort of foster-brother  
 Is the litter or the brood  
 Of that folk in fur or feather  
 Who, with men together,  
 Breast the wind and weather.

[August describes September toiling across  
 the lawn.]

My harvest home is ended; and I spy  
 September drawing nigh  
 With the first thought of Autumn in  
 her eye,  
 And the first sigh  
 Of Autumn wind among her locks  
 that fly.

[September arrives, carrying upon her head  
 a basket heaped high with fruit.]

## SEPTEMBER.

Unload me, brother. I have brought  
 a few  
 Plums and these pears for you,  
 A dozen kinds of apples, one or two  
 Melons, some figs all bursting  
 through



Their skins, and pearly with dew  
These damsons violet-blue.

[While September is speaking, August lifts the basket to the ground, selects various fruits, and withdraws slowly along the gravel walk, eating a pear as he goes.]

My song is half a sigh  
Because my green leaves die ;  
Sweet are my fruits, but all my  
leaves are dying ;  
And well may Autumn sigh,  
And well may I  
Who watch the sere leaves flying.

My leaves that fade and fall,  
I note you one and all ;  
I call you, and the Autumn wind is  
calling,  
Lamenting for your fall,  
And for the fall  
You spread on earth in falling.

And here's a song of flowers to suit  
such hours :  
A song of the last lilies, the last  
flowers,  
Amid my withering bowers.

In the sunny garden bed  
Lilies look so pale,  
Lilies droop the head  
In the shady grassy vale ;  
If all alike they pine  
In shade and in shine,  
If everywhere they grieve,  
Where will lilies live ?

[October enters briskly, some leafy twigs bearing different sorts of nuts in one hand, and a long ripe hop-bine trailing after him from the other. A dahlia is stuck in his buttonhole.]

## OCTOBER.

Nay, cheer up sister. Life is not  
quite over,  
Even if the year has done with corn  
and clover,  
With flowers and leaves ; besides, in  
fact it's true,  
Some leaves remain and some flowers  
too  
For me and you.  
Now see my crops :

[Offering his produce to September.]

I've brought you nuts and hops ;  
And when the leaf drops, why, the  
walnut drops.

[October wreathes the hop-bine about September's neck, and gives her the nut twigs. They enter the cottage together, but without shutting the door. She steps into the background : he advances to the hearth, removes the guard, stirs up the smouldering fire, and arranges several chestnuts ready to roast.]

Crack your first nut and light your  
first fire,  
Roast your first chestnut crisp on  
the bar ;  
Make the logs sparkle, stir the blaze  
higher,  
Logs are cheery as sun or as star,  
Logs we can find wherever we are.

Spring one soft day will open the  
leaves,  
Spring one bright-day will lure  
back the flowers ;  
Never fancy my whistling wind  
grieves,  
Never fancy I've tears in my  
showers :

Dance, nights and days ! and  
dance on, my hours !

[Sees November approaching.]

Here comes my youngest sister,  
 looking dim  
 And grim,  
 With dismal ways.  
 What cheer, November?

# NOVEMBER

[Entering and shutting the door.]

Nought have I to bring,  
 Tramping a-chill and shivering,  
 Except these pine-cones for a blaze,—  
 Except a fog which follows,  
 And stuffs up all the hollows,—  
 Except a hoar frost here and there,—  
 Except some shooting stars  
 Which dart their luminous cars  
 Trackless and noiseless through the  
 keen night air.

[October, shrugging his shoulders, withdraws into the background, while November throws her pine-cones on the fire, and sits down listlessly.]

The earth lies fast asleep, grown  
 tired

Of all that's high or deep;  
 There's nought desired and nought  
 required

Save a sleep.

I rock the cradle of the earth,

I lull her with a sigh;

And know that she will wake to mirth  
 By and by.

[Through the window December is seen running and leaping in the direction of the door. He knocks.]

Ah, here's my youngest brother come  
 at last:

[Calls out without rising.]

Come in, December.

[He opens the door and enters, loaded with evergreens in berry, etc.]

Come, and shut the door,  
 For now it's snowing fast;  
 It snows, and will snow more and  
 more;  
 Don't let it drift in on the floor.  
 But you, you're all aglow; how can  
 you be  
 Rosy and warm and smiling in the  
 cold?

# DECEMBER.

Nay, no closed doors for me,  
 But open doors and open hearts and  
 glee.  
 To welcome young and old.

Dimmest and brightest month  
 am I;  
 My short days end, my lengthening  
 days begin;  
 What matters more or less sun in  
 the sky,  
 When all is sun within?

[He begins making a wreath as he sings.]

Ivy and privet dark as night,  
 I weave with hips and haws a cheer-  
 ful show,  
 And holly for a beauty and delight,  
 And milky mistletoe.

While high above them all I set  
 Yew twigs and Christmas roses pure  
 and pale;  
 Then Spring her snowdrop and her  
 violet  
 May keep, so sweet and frail;

May keep each merry singing bird,  
 Of all her happy birds that singing  
 build:

For I've a carol which some shep-  
herds heard  
Once in a wintry field.

[While December concludes his song all  
the other Months troop in from the garden,  
or advance out of the background. The  
Twelve join hands in a circle, and begin  
dancing round to a stately measure as  
the Curtain falls.]

*Summer 1879.*

## A BALLAD OF BODING

THERE are sleeping dreams and  
waking dreams ;  
What seems is not always as it seems.

I looked out of my window in the  
sweet new morning,  
And there I saw three barges of  
manifold adorning  
Went sailing toward the East :  
The first had sails like fire,  
The next like glittering wire,  
But sackcloth were the sails of the  
least ;  
And all the crews made music, and  
two had spread a feast.

The first choir breathed in flutes,  
And fingered soft guitars ;  
The second won from lutes  
Harmonious chords and jars,  
With drums for stormy bars :  
But the third was all of harpers and  
scarlet trumpeters ;  
Notes of triumph, then  
An alarm again,  
As for onset, as for victory, rallies,  
stirs,  
Peace at last and glory to the van-  
quishers.

The first barge showed for figure-  
head a Love with wings ;  
The second showed for figurehead a  
Worm with stings ;  
The third, a Lily tangled to a Rose  
which clings.  
The first bore for freight gold and  
spice and down ;  
The second bore a sword, a sceptre,  
and a crown ;  
The third, a heap of earth gone to  
dust and brown.  
Winged Love meseemed like Folly  
in the face ;  
Stinged Worm meseemed loathly in  
his place ;  
Lily and Rose were flowers of grace.

Merry went the revel of the fire-  
sailed crew,  
Singing, feasting, dancing to and fro :  
Pleasures ever changing, ever grace-  
ful, ever new ;  
Sighs, but scarce of woe ;  
All the sighing  
Wooed such sweet replying ;  
All the sighing, sweet and low,  
Used to come and go  
For more pleasure, merely so.  
Yet at intervals some one grew  
tired  
Of everything desired,  
And sank, I knew not whither, in  
sorry plight,  
Out of sight.

The second crew seemed ever  
Wider-visioned, graver,  
More distinct of purpose, more sus-  
tained of will ;  
With heads erect and proud,  
And voices sometimes loud ;  
With endless tacking, counter-tack-  
ing,

All things grasping, all things  
lacking,

It would seem ;

Ever shifting helm, or sail, or shroud,  
Drifting on as in a dream.

Hoarding to their utmost bent,

Feasting to their fill,

Yet gnawed by discontent,

Envy, hatred, malice, on their road  
they went.

Their freight was not a treasure,

Their music not a pleasure ;

The sword flashed, cleaving through  
their bands,

Sceptre and crown changed hands.

The third crew as they went

Seemed mostly different ;

They toiled in rowing, for to them  
the wind was contrary,

As all the world might see.

They laboured at the oar,

While on their heads they bore

The fiery stress of sunshine more  
and more.

They laboured at the oar hand-  
sore,

Till rain went splashing,

And spray went dashing,

Down on them, and up on them,  
more and more.

Their sails were patched and rent,

Their masts were bent,

In peril of their lives they worked  
and went.

For them no feast was spread,

No soft luxurious bed

Scented and white,

No crown or sceptre hung in sight ;

In weariness and painfulness,

In thirst and sore distress,

They rowed and steered from left  
to right

With all their might.

Their trumpeters and harpers round  
about

Incessantly played out,

And sometimes they made answer  
with a shout ;

But oftener they groaned or wept,

And seldom paused to eat, and  
seldom slept.

I wept for pity watching them, but  
more

I wept heart-sore

Once and again to see

Some weary man plunge overboard,  
and swim

To Love or Worm ship floating  
buoyantly :

And there all welcomed him.

The ships steered each apart and  
seemed to scorn each other,

Yet all the crews were inter-  
changeable ;

Now one man, now another,—

Like bloodless spectres some, some  
flushed by health,—

Changed openly, or changed by  
stealth,

Scaling a slippery side, and scaled  
it well.

The most left Love ship, hauling  
wealth

Up Worm ship's side ;

While some few hollow-eyed

Left either for the sack-sailed boat ;

But this, though not remote,

Was worst to mount, and whoso left  
it once

Scarce ever came again,

But seemed to loathe his erst  
companions,

And wish and work them bane.

Then I knew (I know not how) there  
lurked quicksands full of dread,

Rocks and reefs and whirlpools in  
 the water bed,  
 Whence a waterspout  
 Instantaneously leaped out,  
 Roaring as it reared its head.  
 Soon I spied a something dim  
 Many-handed, grim,  
 That went flitting to and fro the first  
 and second ship ;  
 It puffed their sails full out  
 With puffs of smoky breath  
 From a smouldering lip,  
 And cleared the waterspout  
 Which reeled roaring round about  
 Threatening death.  
 With a horny hand it steered,  
 And a horn appeared  
 On its sneering head upreared  
 Haughty and high  
 Against the blackening lowering sky.  
 With a hoof it swayed the waves ;  
 They opened here and there,  
 Till I spied deep open graves  
 Full of skeletons  
 That were men and women once  
 Foul or fair ;  
 Full of things that creep  
 And fester in the deep  
 And never breathe the clean life-  
 nurturing air.

The third bark held aloof  
 From the Monster with the hoof,  
 Despite his urgent beck,  
 And fraught with guile  
 Abominable his smile ;  
 Till I saw him take a flying leap on  
 to that deck.  
 Then full of awe,  
 With these same eyes I saw  
 His head incredible retract its horn  
 Rounding like babe's new born,  
 While silvery phosphorescence played  
 About his dis-horned head.

The sneer smoothed from his lip,  
 He beamed blandly on the ship ;  
 All winds sank to a moan,  
 All waves to a monotone  
 (For all these seemed his realm),  
 While he laid a strong caressing  
 hand upon the helm.

Then a cry well nigh of despair  
 Shrieked to heaven, a clamour of  
 desperate prayer.  
 The harpers harped no more,  
 While the trumpeters sounded sore,  
 An alarm to wake the dead from  
 their bed :  
 To the rescue, to the rescue, now  
 or never,  
 To the rescue, O ye living, O ye dead,  
 Or no more help or hope for ever !—  
 The planks strained as though they  
 must part asunder,  
 The masts bent as though they must  
 dip under,  
 And the winds and the waves at length  
 Girt up their strength,  
 And the depths were laid bare,  
 And heaven flashed fire and volleyed  
 thunder  
 Through the rain-choked air,  
 And sea and sky seemed to kiss  
 In the horror and the hiss  
 Of the whole world shuddering every-  
 where.

Lo ! a Flyer swooping down  
 With wings to span the globe,  
 And splendour for his robe  
 And splendour for his crown.  
 He lighted on the helm with a foot  
 of fire,  
 And spun the Monster overboard :  
 And that monstrous thing abhorred,  
 Gnashing with balked desire,  
 Wriggled like a worm infirm

Up the Worm  
Of the loathly figurehead.  
There he crouched and gnashed ;  
And his head re-horned, and gashed  
From the other's grapple, dripped  
bloody red.

I saw that thing accurst  
Wreak his worst  
On the first and second crew :  
Some with baited hook  
He angled for and took,  
Some dragged overboard in a net  
he threw ;  
Some he did to death  
With hoof or horn or blasting breath.

I heard a voice of wailing  
Where the ships went sailing,  
A sorrowful voice prevailing  
Above the sound of the sea,  
Above the singers' voices,  
And musical merry noises ;  
All songs had turned to sighing,  
The light was failing,  
The day was dying—  
Ah me  
That such a sorrow should be !

There was sorrow on the sea and  
sorrow on the land  
When Love ship went down by the  
bottomless quicksand  
To its grave in the bitter wave.  
There was sorrow on the sea and  
sorrow on the land  
When Worm ship went to pieces on  
the rock-bound strand,  
And the bitter wave was its grave.  
But land and sea waxed hoary  
In whiteness of a glory  
Never told in story  
Nor seen by mortal eye,  
When the third ship crossed the bar  
Where whirls and breakers are,

And steered into the splendours of  
the sky ;  
That third bark and that least  
Which had never seemed to feast,  
Yet kept high festival above sun and  
moon and star.

*Before 1882.*

## MONNA INNOMINATA

### A SONNET OF SONNETS

BEATRICE, immortalized by 'altissimo poeta . . . cotanto amante' ; Laura, celebrated by a great though an inferior bard, —have alike paid the exceptional penalty of exceptional honour, and have come down to us resplendent with charms, but (at least, to my apprehension) scant of attractiveness.

These heroines of world-wide fame were preceded by a bevy of unnamed ladies, 'donne innominate,' sung by a school of less conspicuous poets ; and in that land and that period which gave simultaneous birth to Catholics, to Albigenses, and to Troubadours, one can imagine many a lady as sharing her lover's poetic aptitude, while the barrier between them might be one held sacred by both, yet not such as to render mutual love incompatible with mutual honour.

Had such a lady spoken for herself, the portrait left us might have appeared more tender, if less dignified, than any drawn even by a devoted friend. Or had the Great Poetess of our own day and nation only been unhappy instead of happy, her circumstances would have invited her to bequeath to us, in lieu of the 'Portuguese Sonnets,' an inimitable 'donna innominata' drawn not from fancy but from feeling, and worthy to occupy a niche beside Beatrice and Laura.

I

'Lo di che han detto a' dolci amici addio.'  
DANTE.

'Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci !'  
PETRARCA.

COME back to me, who wait and  
watch for you :—



Or come not yet, for it is over then,  
 And long it is before you come  
 again,  
 So far between my pleasures are and  
 few.  
 While, when you come not, what I  
 do I do  
 Thinking 'Now when he comes,'  
 my sweetest 'when':  
 For one man is my world of all  
 the men  
 This wide world holds; O love, my  
 world is you.  
 Howbeit, to meet you grows almost  
 a pang  
 Because the pang of parting  
 comes so soon;  
 My hope hangs waning, waxing,  
 like a moon  
 Between the heavenly days on  
 which we meet:  
 Ah me, but where are now the songs  
 I sang  
 When life was sweet because you  
 called them sweet?

2

'Era già l'ora che volge il desio.'—DANTE.  
 'Ricorro al tempo ch' io vi vidi prima.'  
 PETRARCA.

I wish I could remember that first day,  
 First hour, first moment of your  
 meeting me,  
 If bright or dim the season, it  
 might be  
 Summer or Winter for aught I can  
 say;  
 So unrecorded did it slip away,  
 So blind was I to see and to fore-  
 see,  
 So dull to mark the budding of  
 my tree  
 That would not blossom yet for  
 many a May.

If only I could recollect it, such  
 A day of days! I let it come  
 and go  
 As traceless as a thaw of bygone  
 snow;  
 It seemed to mean so little, meant  
 so much;  
 If only now I could recall that touch,  
 First touch of hand in hand—Did  
 one but know!

3

'O ombre vane, fuor che ne l'aspetto!'  
 DANTE.

'Immaginata guida la conduce.'  
 PETRARCA.

I dream of you, to wake: would that  
 I might  
 Dream of you and not wake but  
 slumber on;  
 Nor find with dreams the dear  
 companion gone,  
 As, Summer ended, Summer birds  
 take flight.  
 In happy dreams I hold you full in  
 sight,  
 I blush again who waking look  
 so wan;  
 Brighter than sunniest day that  
 ever shone,  
 In happy dreams your smile makes  
 day of night.  
 Thus only in a dream we are at one,  
 Thus only in a dream we give  
 and take  
 The faith that maketh rich who  
 take or give;  
 If thus to sleep is sweeter than to  
 wake,  
 To die were surely sweeter  
 than to live,  
 Though there be nothing new be-  
 neath the sun.

## 4

'Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda.'

DANTE.

'Ogni altra cosa, ogni pensier va fore,  
E sol ivi con voi rimansi amore.'

PETRARCA.

I loved you first: but afterwards  
your love,

Outsoaring mine, sang such a  
loftier song

As drowned the friendly cooings of  
my dove.

Which owes the other most? My  
love was long,

And yours one moment seemed to  
wax more strong;

I loved and guessed at you, you  
construed me

And loved me for what might or  
might not be—

Nay, weights and measures do us  
both a wrong.

For verily love knows not 'mine' or  
'thine';

With separate 'I' and 'thou' free  
love has done,

For one is both and both are  
one in love:

Rich love knows nought of 'thine  
that is not mine';

Both have the strength and both  
the length thereof,

Both of us, of the love which  
makes us one.

## 5

'Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona.'

DANTE.

'Amor m'addusse in sì gioiosa spene.'

PETRARCA.

O my heart's heart, and you who  
are to me

More than myself myself, God be  
with you,

Keep you in strong obedience leal  
and true

To Him whose noble service setteth  
free;

Give you all good we see or can  
foresee,

Make your joys many and your  
sorrows few,

Bless you in what you bear and  
what you do,

Yea, perfect you as He would have  
you be.

So much for you; but what for me,  
dear friend?

To love you without stint and all  
I can,

To-day, to-morrow, world without an  
end;

To love you much and yet to love  
you more,

As Jordan at his flood sweeps either  
shore;

Since woman is the helpmeet  
made for man.

## 6

'Or puoi la quantitate  
Comprender de l'amor che a te mi scalda.'

DANTE.

'Non vo' che da tal nodo amor mi scioglia.'

PETRARCA.

Trust me, I have not earned your  
dear rebuke,—

I love, as you would have me,  
God the most;

Would lose not Him, but you,  
must one be lost,

Nor with Lot's wife cast back a  
faithless look,

Unready to forego what I forsook;  
This say I, having counted up the  
cost,

This, though I be the feeblest of  
God's host,

The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds  
with His crook.

Yet while I love my God the most,  
I deem

That I can never love you over-  
much ;

I love Him more, so let me love  
you too ;

Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such  
I cannot love you if I love not Him,  
I cannot love Him if I love not  
you.

7

'Qui primavera sempre ed ogni frutto.'  
DANTE.

'Ragionando con meco ed io con lui.'  
PETRARCA.

'Love me, for I love you'—and  
answer me,

'Love me, for I love you': so  
shall we stand

As happy equals in the flowering  
land

Of love, that knows not a dividing  
sea.

Love builds the house on rock and  
not on sand,

Love laughs what while the winds  
rave desperately ;

And who hath found love's citadel  
unmanned ?

And who hath held in bonds love's  
liberty ?—

My heart's a coward though my  
words are brave—

We meet so seldom, yet we surely  
part

So often ; there's a problem for  
your art !

Still I find comfort in his Book  
who saith,

Though jealousy be cruel as the  
grave,

And death be strong, yet love  
is strong as death.

8

'Come dicesse a Dio, D'altro non calme.'  
DANTE.

'Spero trovar pietà non che perdono.'  
PETRARCA.

'I, if I perish, perish'—Esther spake :  
And bride of life or death she made  
her fair

In all the lustre of her perfumed  
hair

And smiles that kindle longing but  
to slake.

She put on pomp of loveliness, to  
take

Her husband through his eyes at  
unaware ;

She spread abroad her beauty for  
a snare,

Harmless as doves and subtle as a  
snake.

She trapped him with one mesh of  
silken hair,

She vanquished him by wisdom of  
her wit,

And built her people's house  
that it should stand :—

If I might take my life so in my  
hand,

And for my love to Love put up my  
prayer,

And for love's sake by Love be  
granted it !

9

'O dignitosa coscienza e netta !'—DANTE.  
'Spirto più acceso di virtuti ardenti.'

PETRARCA.

Thinking of you, and all that was,  
and all

That might have been and now  
can never be,

I feel your honoured excellence,  
 and see  
 Myself unworthy of the happier call :  
 For woe is me who walk so apt to fall,  
 So apt to shrink afraid, so apt to  
 flee,  
 Apt to lie down and die (ah woe  
 is me !)  
 Faithless and hopeless turning to the  
 wall.  
 And yet not hopeless quite nor faith-  
 less quite,  
 Because not loveless ; love may toil  
 all night,  
 But take at morning ; wrestle till  
 the break  
 Of day, but then wield power with  
 God and man :—  
 So take I heart of grace as best I  
 can,  
 Ready to spend and be spent for  
 your sake.

10

'Con miglior corso e con migliore stella.'

DANTE.

'La vita fugge e non s'arresta un' ora.'

PETRARCA.

Time flies, hope flags, life plies a  
 wearied wing ;  
 Death following hard on life gains  
 ground apace ;  
 Faith runs with each and rears an  
 eager face,  
 Outruns the rest, makes light of  
 everything,  
 Spurns earth, and still finds breath  
 to pray and sing ;  
 While love ahead of all uplifts his  
 praise,  
 Still asks for grace and still gives  
 thanks for grace,  
 Content with all day brings and  
 night will bring.

Life wanes ; and when love folds his  
 wings above  
 Tired hope, and less we feel his  
 conscious pulse,  
 Let us go fall asleep, dear friend,  
 in peace :  
 A little while, and age and  
 sorrow cease ;  
 A little while, and life reborn  
 annuls  
 Loss and decay and death, and all  
 is love.

11

'Vien dietro a me e lascia dir le genti.'

DANTE.

'Contando i casi della vita nostra.'

PETRARCA.

Many in aftertimes will say of you  
 'He loved her'—while of me what  
 will they say ?  
 Not that I loved you more than  
 just in play,  
 For fashion's sake as idle women do.  
 Even let them prate ; who know not  
 what we knew  
 Of love and parting in exceeding  
 pain,  
 Of parting hopeless here to meet  
 again,  
 Hopeless on earth, and heaven is  
 out of view.  
 But by my heart of love laid bare to  
 you,  
 My love that you can make not  
 void nor vain,  
 Love that foregoes you but to claim  
 anew  
 Beyond this passage of the gate of  
 death,  
 I charge you at the Judgment  
 make it plain  
 My love of you was life and not a  
 breath.

12

'Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona.'

DANTE.

'Amor vien nel bel viso di costei.'

PETRARCA.

If there be any one can take my place  
And make you happy whom I  
grieve to grieve,  
Think not that I can grudge it,  
but believe

I do commend you to that nobler  
grace,

That readier wit than mine, that  
sweeter face ;

Yea, since your riches make me  
rich, conceive

I too am crowned, while bridal  
crowns I weave,

And thread the bridal dance with  
jocund pace.

For if I did not love you, it might be  
That I should grudge you some  
one dear delight ;

But since the heart is yours  
that was mine own,

Your pleasure is my pleasure,  
right my right,

Your honourable freedom makes me  
free,

And you companioned I am not  
alone.

13

'E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore.'

DANTE.

'Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia.'

PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with  
your fate,

Shall I not rather trust it in God's  
hand ?

Without Whose Will one lily doth  
not stand,

Nor sparrow fall at his appointed  
date ;

Who numbereth the innumerable  
sand,

Who weighs the wind and water  
with a weight,

To Whom the world is neither small  
nor great,

Whose knowledge foreknew every  
plan we planned.

Searching my heart for all that  
touches you,

I find there only love and love's  
goodwill

Helpless to help and impotent to  
do,

Of understanding dull, of sight most  
dim ;

And therefore I commend you back  
to Him

Whose love your love's capacity  
can fill.

14

'E la Sua Volontade è nostra pace.'

DANTE.

'Sol con questi pensier, con altre chiome.'

PETRARCA.

Youth gone, and beauty gone if ever  
there

Dwelt beauty in so poor a face as  
this ;

Youth gone and beauty, what  
remains of bliss ?

I will not bind fresh roses in my hair,  
To shame a cheek at best but little  
fair,—

Leave youth his roses, who can  
bear a thorn,—

I will not seek for blossoms anywhere,  
Except such common flowers as  
blow with corn.

Youth gone and beauty gone, what  
doth remain ?

The longing of a heart pent up  
forlorn,  
A silent heart whose silence  
loves and longs ;  
The silence of a heart which  
sang its songs  
While youth and beauty made a  
summer morn,  
Silence of love that cannot sing  
again.

*Before 1882.*

### AN OLD-WORLD THICKET

'Una selva oscura.'—DANTE.

AWAKE or sleeping (for I know not  
which)

I was or was not mazed within a  
wood

Where every mother-bird brought  
up her brood

Safe in some leafy niche

Of oak or ash, of cypress or of  
beech,

Of silvery aspen trembling delicately,  
Of plane or warmer-tinted syc-  
more,

Of elm that dies in secret from  
the core,

Of ivy weak and free,

Of pines, of all green lofty things  
that be.

Such birds they seemed as challenged  
each desire ;

Like spots of azure heaven upon  
the wing,

Like downy emeralds that alight  
and sing,

Like actual coals on fire,

Like anything they seemed, and  
everything.

Such mirth they made, such warb-  
lings and such chat,  
With tongue of music in a well-  
tuned beak,  
They seemed to speak more  
wisdom than we speak,  
To make our music flat  
And all our subtlest reasonings  
wild or weak.

Their meat was nought but flowers  
like butterflies,

With berries coral-coloured or like  
gold ;

Their drink was only dew, which  
blossoms hold

Deep where the honey lies ;

Their wings and tails were lit by  
sparkling eyes.

The shade wherein they revelled was  
a shade

That danced and twinkled to the  
unseen sun ;

Branches and leaves cast shadows  
one by one,

And all their shadows swayed

In breaths of air that rustled and  
that played.

A sound of waters neither rose nor  
sank,

And spread a sense of freshness  
through the air ;

It seemed not here or there, but  
everywhere,

As if the whole earth drank,

Root fathom-deep and strawberry on  
its bank.

But I who saw such things as I have  
said

Was overdone with utter wear-  
iness ;



And walked in care, as one whom  
 fears oppress,  
 Because above his head  
 Death hangs, or damage, or the  
 dearth of bread.

Each sore defeat of my defeated life  
 Faced and outfaced me in that  
 bitter hour ;  
 And turned to yearning palsy all  
 my power,  
 And all my peace to strife,  
 Self stabbing self with keen lack-pity  
 knife.

Sweetness of beauty moved me to  
 despair,  
 Stung me to anger by its mere  
 content,  
 Made me all lonely on that way  
 I went,  
 Piled care upon my care,  
 Brimmed full my cup, and stripped  
 me empty and bare :

For all that was but showed what  
 all was not,  
 But gave clear proof of what  
 might never be ;  
 Making more destitute my poverty,  
 And yet more blank my lot,  
 And me much sadder by its jubilee.

Therefore I sat me down : for where-  
 fore walk ?  
 And closed mine eyes : for where-  
 fore see or hear ?

Alas, I had no shutter to mine ear,  
 And could not shun the talk  
 Of all rejoicing creatures far or  
 near.

Without my will I hearkened and I  
 heard  
 (Asleep or waking, for I know not  
 which),

R

Till note by note the music  
 changed its pitch ;  
 Bird ceased to answer bird,  
 And every wind sighed softly if it  
 stirred.

The drip of widening waters seemed  
 to weep,  
 All fountains sobbed and gurgled  
 as they sprang,  
 Somewhere a cataract cried out in  
 its leap  
 Sheer down a headlong steep ;  
 High over all cloud-thunders gave  
 a clang.

Such universal sound of lamentation  
 I heard and felt, fain not to feel  
 or hear ;  
 Nought else there seemed but  
 anguish far and near ;  
 Nought else but all creation  
 Moaning and groaning wrung by  
 pain or fear,

Shuddering in the misery of its  
 doom :  
 My heart then rose a rebel against  
 light,  
 Scouring all earth and heaven  
 and depth and height,  
 Ingathering wrath and gloom,  
 Ingathering wrath to wrath and  
 night to night.

Ah me, the bitterness of such revolt,  
 All impotent, all hateful, and all  
 hate,  
 That kicks and breaks itself against  
 the bolt  
 Of an imprisoning fate,  
 And vainly shakes, and cannot  
 shake the gate.

F

Agony to agony, deep called to deep,  
 Out of the deep I called of my desire ;  
 My strength was weakness and my heart was fire ;  
 Mine eyes, that would not weep  
 Or sleep, scaled height and depth,  
 and could not sleep ;

The eyes, I mean, of my rebellious soul,  
 For still my bodily eyes were closed and dark :  
 A random thing I seemed without a mark,  
 Racing without a goal,  
 Adrift upon life's sea without an ark.

More leaden than the actual self of lead  
 Outer and inner darkness weighed on me.  
 The tide of anger ebbcd. Then fierce and free  
 Surged full above my head  
 The moaning tide of helpless misery.

Why should I breathe, whose breath was but a sigh ?  
 Why should I live, who drew such painful breath ?  
 Oh weary work, the unanswerable why !—  
 Yet I, why should I die,  
 Who had no hope in life, no hope in death ?

Grasses and mosses and the fallen leaf  
 Make peaceful bed for an indefinite term ;

But underneath the grass there gnaws a worm—  
 Haply, there gnaws a grief—  
 Both, haply always ; not, as now, so brief.

The pleasure I remember, it is past ;  
 The pain I feel is passing passing by ;  
 Thus all the world is passing, and thus I :  
 All things that cannot last  
 Have grown familiar, and are born to die.

And being familiar, have so long been borne  
 That habit trains us not to break but bend :  
 Mourning grows natural to us who mourn  
 In foresight of an end,  
 But that which ends not who shall brave or mend ?

Surely the ripe fruits tremble on their bough,  
 They cling and linger trembling till they drop :  
 I, trembling, cling to dying life ; for how  
 Face the perpetual Now ?  
 Birthless and deathless, void of start or stop,

Void of repentance, void of hope and fear,  
 Of possibility, alternative,  
 Of all that ever made us bear to live  
 From night to morning here,  
 Of promise even which has no gift to give.

The wood, and every creature of the  
wood,

Seemed mourning with me in an  
undertone ;

Soft scattered chirpings and a  
windy moan,

Trees rustling, where they stood  
And shivered, showed compassion  
for my mood.

Rage to despair ; and now despair  
had turned

Back to self-pity and mere weariness,

With yearnings like a smouldering  
fire that burned,

And might grow more or less,  
And might die out or wax to white  
excess.

Without, within me, music seemed  
to be ;

Something not music, yet most  
musical,

Silence and sound in heavenly  
harmony ;

At length a pattering fall  
Of feet, a bell, and bleatings, broke  
through all.

Then I looked up. The wood lay  
in a glow

From golden sunset and from  
ruddy sky ;

The sun had stooped to earth  
though once so high ;

Had stooped to earth, in slow  
Warm dying loveliness brought near  
and low.

Each water drop made answer to  
the light,

Lit up a spark and showed the  
sun his face ;

Soft purple shadows paved the  
grassy space

And crept from height to height,  
From height to loftier height crept  
up apace.

While opposite the sun a gazing  
moon

Put on his glory for her coronet,  
Kindling her luminous coldness to  
its noon,

As his great splendour set ;  
One only star made up her train  
as yet.

Each twig was tipped with gold, each  
leaf was edged

And veined with gold from the  
gold-flooded west ;

Each mother-bird, and mate-bird,  
and unfledged

Nestling, and curious nest,  
Displayed a gilded moss or beak  
or breast.

And filing peacefully between the  
trees,

Having the moon behind them,  
and the sun

Full in their meek mild faces, walked  
at ease

A homeward flock, at peace  
With one another and with every  
one.

A patriarchal ram with tinkling bell  
Led all his kin ; sometimes one  
browsing sheep

Hung back a moment, or one  
lamb would leap

And frolic in a dell ;

Yet still they kept together, journey-  
ing well,

And bleating, one or other, many or  
few,  
Journeying together toward the  
sunlit west ;  
Mild face by face, and woolly breast  
by breast,  
Patient, sun-brightened too,  
Still journeying toward the sunset  
and their rest.

*Before 1882.*

## ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE, O LORD

### A PROCESSIONAL OF CREATION

#### ALL

I ALL-CREATION sing my song of  
praise  
To God Who made me and vouch-  
safes my days,  
And sends me forth by multitudinous  
ways.

#### SERAPH

I, like my Brethren, burn eternally  
With love of Him Who is Love, and  
loveth me ;  
The Holy, Holy, Holy Unity.

#### CHERUB

I, with my Brethren, gaze eternally  
On Him Who is Wisdom, and Who  
knoweth me ;  
The Holy, Holy, Holy Trinity.

#### ALL ANGELS

We rule, we serve, we work, we  
store His treasure,  
Whose vessels are we brimmed with  
strength and pleasure ;  
Our joys fulfil, yea, overfill our  
measure.

### HEAVENS

We float before the Presence Infinite,  
We cluster round the Throne in our  
delight,  
Revolving and rejoicing in God's  
sight.

### FIRMAMENT

I, blue and beautiful, and framed of  
air,  
At sunrise and at sunset grow most  
fair ;  
His glory by my glories I declare.

### POWERS

We Powers are powers because He  
makes us strong ;  
Wherefore we roll all rolling orbs  
along,  
We move all moving things, and  
sing our song.

### SUN

I blaze to Him in mine engarlanding  
Of rays, I flame His whole burnt-  
offering,  
While as a bridegroom I rejoice  
and sing.

### MOON

I follow, and am fair, and do His  
Will ;  
Through all my changes I am faith-  
ful still,  
Full-orbed or strait His mandate to  
fulfil.

### STARS

We Star-hosts numerous, innumer-  
ous,  
Throng space with energy untumultu-  
ous,  
And work His Will Whose eye  
beholdeth us.

## GALAXIES AND NEBULÆ

No thing is far or near ; and therefore we  
 Float neither far nor near ; but where we be  
 Weave dances round the Throne perpetually.

## COMETS AND METEORS

Our lights dart here and there, whirl to and fro,  
 We flash and vanish, we die down and glow ;  
 All doing His Will Who bids us do it so.

## SHOWERS

We give ourselves ; and be we great or small,  
 Thus are we made like Him Who giveth all,  
 Like Him Whose gracious pleasure bids us fall.

## DEWS

We give ourselves in silent secret ways,  
 Spending and spent in silence full of grace ;  
 And thus are made like God, and show His praise.

## WINDS

We sift the air and winnow all the earth ;  
 And God Who poised our weights and weighs our worth  
 Accepts the worship of our solemn mirth.

## FIRE

My power and strength are His Who fashioned me,  
 Ordained me image of His Jealousy,

Forged me His weapon fierce exceedingly.

## HEAT

I glow unto His glory, and do good :  
 I glow, and bring to life both bud and brood ;  
 I glow, and ripen harvest-crops for food.

## WINTER AND SUMMER

Our wealth and joys and beauties celebrate  
 His wealth of beauty Who sustains our state,  
 Before Whose changelessness we alternate.

## SPRING AND AUTUMN

I hope,—  
 And I remember,—  
 We give place  
 Either to other with contented grace,  
 Acceptable and lovely all our days.

## FROST

I make the unstable stable, binding fast  
 The world of waters prone to ripple past :  
 Thus praise I God, Whose mercies I forecast.

## COLD

I rouse and goad the slothful apt to nod,  
 I stir and urge the laggards with my rod :  
 My praise is not of men, yet I praise God.

## SNOW

My whiteness shadoweth Him Who is most fair,

All spotless: yea, my whiteness which  
I wear  
Exalts His Purity beyond compare.

#### VAPOURS

We darken sun and moon, and blot  
the day,  
The good Will of our Maker to obey :  
Till to the glory of God we pass  
away.

#### NIGHT

Moon and all stars I don for diadem  
To make me fair: I cast myself and  
them  
Before His feet Who knows us gem  
from gem.

#### DAY

I shout before Him in my plenitude  
Of light and warmth, of hope and  
wealth and food ;  
Ascribing all good to the Only Good.

#### LIGHT AND DARKNESS

I am God's dwelling-place,—  
And also I  
Make His pavilion,—  
Lo, we bide and fly  
Exulting in the Will of God Most  
High.

#### LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

We indivisible flash forth His Fame,  
We thunder forth the glory of His  
Name,  
In harmony of resonance and flame.

#### CLOUDS

Sweet is our store, exhaled from sea  
or river :  
We wear a rainbow, praising God  
the Giver  
Because His mercy is for ever and  
ever.

#### EARTH

I rest in Him rejoicing: resting so  
And so rejoicing, in that I am low ;  
Yet known of Him, and following on  
to know.

#### MOUNTAINS

Our heights which laud Him sink  
abased before  
Him higher than the highest ever-  
more :  
God higher than the highest we  
adore.

#### HILLS

We green-tops praise Him, and we  
fruitful heads,  
Whereon the sunshine and the dew  
He sheds :  
We green-tops praise Him, rising  
from our beds.

#### GREEN THINGS

We all green things, we blossoms  
bright or dim,  
Trees, bushes, brushwood, corn and  
grasses slim,  
We lift our many-favoured lauds to  
Him.

#### ROSE—LILY—VIOLET

I praise Him on my thorn which I  
adorn,—  
And I, amid my world of thistle and  
thorn,—  
And I, within my veil where I am born.

#### APPLE—CITRON—POMEGRANATE

We Apple-blossom, Citron, Pome-  
granate,  
We clothed of God without our toil  
and fret,  
We offer fatness where His Throne  
is set.



## VINE—CEDAR—PALM

I proffer Him my sweetness, who  
am sweet,—  
I bow my strength in fragrance at  
His feet,—  
I wave myself before His Judgment  
seat.

## MEDICINAL HERBS

I bring refreshment,—  
I bring ease and calm,—  
I lavish strength and healing,—  
I am balm,—  
We work His pitiful Will and chant  
our psalm.

## A SPRING

Clear my pure fountain, clear and  
pure my rill,  
My fountain and mine outflow deep  
and still ;  
I set His semblance forth and do  
His Will.

## SEA

To-day I praise God with a sparkling  
face,  
My thousand thousand waves all  
uttering praise :  
To-morrow I commit me to His  
Grace.

## FLOODS

We spring and swell meandering to  
and fro,  
From height to depth, from depth to  
depth we flow,  
We fertilize the world, and praise  
Him so.

## WHALES AND SEA MAMMALS

We Whales and Monsters gambol  
in His sight,

Rejoicing every day and every  
night,  
Safe in the tender keeping of His  
Might.

## FISHES

Our fashions and our colours and  
our speeds  
Set forth His praise Who framed us  
and Who feeds,  
Who knows our number and regards  
our needs.

## BIRDS

Winged Angels of this visible world,  
we fly  
To sing God's praises in the lofty  
sky ;  
We scale the height to praise our  
Lord most High.

## EAGLE AND DOVE

I the sun-gazing Eagle,—  
I the Dove  
With plumes of softness and a note  
of love,—  
We praise by divers gifts One God  
above.

## BEASTS AND CATTLE

We forest Beasts,—  
We Beasts of hill or cave,—  
We border-loving Creatures of the  
wave,—  
We praise our King with voices deep  
and grave.

## SMALL ANIMALS

God forms us weak and small, but  
pours out all  
We need, and notes us while we  
stand or fall :  
Wherefore we praise Him, weak and  
safe and small.

## LAMB

I praise my loving Lord, Who  
maketh me  
His type by harmless sweet simplicity :  
Yet He the Lamb of lambs incomparably.

## LION

I praise the Lion of the Royal Race,  
Strongest in fight and swiftest in the chase :  
With all my might I leap and lavish praise.

## ALL MEN

All creatures sing around us, and we sing :  
We bring our own selves as our offering,  
Our very selves we render to our King.

## ISRAEL

Flock of our Shepherd's pasture and His fold,  
Purchased and well-beloved from days of old,  
We tell His praise which still remains untold.

## PRIESTS

We free-will Shepherds tend His sheep and feed ;  
We follow Him while caring for their need ;  
We follow praising Him, and them we lead.

## SERVANTS OF GOD

We love God, for He loves us ; we are free  
In serving Him, who serve Him willingly :  
As kings we reign, and praise His Majesty.

## HOLY AND HUMBLE PERSONS

All humble souls He calls and sanctifies ;  
All holy souls He calls to make them wise ;  
Accepting all, His free-will sacrifice.

## BABES

He maketh me,—  
And me,—  
And me,—  
To be  
His blessed little ones around His knee,  
Who praise Him by mere love confidently.

## WOMEN

God makes our service love, and makes our wage  
Love : so we wend on patient pilgrimage,  
Extolling Him by love from age to age.

## MEN

God gives us power to rule : He gives us power  
To rule ourselves, and prune the exuberant flower  
Of youth, and worship Him hour after hour.

## SPIRITS AND SOULS—

Lo in the hidden world we chant our chant  
To Him Who fills us that we nothing want,  
To Him Whose bounty leaves our craving scant.

## OF BABES—

With milky mouths we praise God, from the breast

Called home betimes to rest the  
perfect rest,  
By love and joy fulfilling His behest.

## OF WOMEN—

We praise His Will which made us  
what He would,  
His Will which fashioned us and  
called us good,  
His Will our plenary beatitude.

## OF MEN

We praise His Will Who bore with  
us so long,  
Who out of weakness wrought us  
swift and strong,  
Champions of right and putters-  
down of wrong.

## ALL

Let everything that hath or hath  
not breath,  
Let days and endless days, let life  
and death,  
Praise God, praise God, praise God,  
His creature saith.

*Before 1882.*

LATER LIFE : A DOUBLE  
SONNET OF SONNETS

## I

BEFORE the mountains were brought  
forth, before  
Earth and the world were made,  
then God was God :  
And God will still be God when  
flames shall roar  
Round earth and heaven dis-  
solving at His nod :  
And this God is our God, even  
while His rod

Of righteous wrath falls on us smiting  
sore :

And this God is our God for ever-  
more,

Through life, through death, while  
clod returns to clod.

For though He slay us we will trust  
in Him ;

We will flock home to Him by  
divers ways :

Yea, though He slay us we will  
vaunt His praise,

Serving and loving with the Cheru-  
bim,

Watching and loving with the Sera-  
phim,

Our very selves His praise through  
endless days.

## 2

Rend hearts and rend not garments  
for our sins ;

Gird sackcloth not on body but  
on soul ;

Grovel in dust with faces toward  
the goal

Nor won nor neared : he only laughs  
who wins.

Not neared the goal, the race too  
late begins ;

All left undone, we have yet to  
do the whole ;

The sun is hurrying west and  
toward the pole

Where darkness waits for earth with  
all her kins.

Let us to-day while it is called to-day  
Set out, if utmost speed may yet  
avail—

The shadows lengthen and the  
light grows pale :

For who through darkness and  
the shadow of death,

Darkness that may be felt, shall find  
a way,  
Blind-eyed, deaf-eared, and  
choked with failing breath?

## 3

Thou Who didst make and knowest  
whereof we are made,  
Oh bear in mind our dust and  
nothingness,  
Our wordless tearless numbness  
of distress :

Bear Thou in mind the burden Thou  
hast laid

Upon us, and our feebleness unstayed  
Except Thou stay us : for the  
long long race

Which stretches far and far before  
our face

Thou knowest, — remember Thou  
whereof we are made.

If making makes us Thine then  
Thine we are,

And if redemption we are twice  
Thine own :

If once Thou didst come down from  
heaven afar

To seek us and to find us, how not  
save ?

Comfort us, save us, leave us not  
alone,

Thou who didst die our death and  
fill our grave.

## 4

So tired am I, so weary of to-day,  
So unrefreshed from foregone  
weariness,

So overburdened by foreseen  
distress,

So lagging and so stumbling on my  
way,

I scarce can rouse myself to watch  
or pray,

To hope, or aim, or toil for more  
or less,—

Ah always less and less, even  
while I press

Forward and toil and aim as best I  
may.

Half-starved of soul and heartsick  
utterly,

Yet lift I up my heart and soul  
and eyes

(Which fail in looking upward)  
toward the prize :

Me, Lord, Thou seest though I see  
not Thee ;

Me now, as once the Thief in  
Paradise,

Even me, O Lord my Lord, remem-  
ber me.

## 5

Lord, Thou Thyself art Love and  
only Thou ;

Yet I who am not love would fain  
love Thee ;

But Thou alone being Love canst  
furnish me

With that same love my heart is  
craving now.

Allow my plea ! for if Thou disallow,  
No second fountain can I find  
but Thee ;

No second hope or help is left to  
me,

No second anything, but only Thou.  
O Love, accept, according my re-  
quest ;

O Love, exhaust, fulfilling my  
desire :

Uphold me with the strength that  
cannot tire,

Nerve me to labour till Thou bid me  
rest,

Kindle my fire from Thine un-  
kindled fire,

And charm the willing heart from  
out my breast.

## 6

We lack, yet cannot fix upon the lack:  
Not this, nor that ; yet somewhat,  
certainly.

We see the things we do not yearn  
to see

Around us: and what see we glancing  
back ?

Lost hopes that leave our hearts upon  
the rack,

Hopes that were never ours yet  
seemed to be,

For which we steered on life's salt  
stormy sea

Braving the sunstroke and the frozen  
pack.

If thus to look behind is all in vain,  
And all in vain to look to left or  
right,

Why face we not our future once  
again,

Launching with hardier hearts across  
the main,

Straining dim eyes to catch the  
invisible sight,

And strong to bear ourselves in  
patient pain ?

## 7

To love and to remember ; that is  
good :

To love and to forget ; that is  
not well :

To lapse from love to hatred ;  
that is hell

And death and torment, rightly  
understood.

Soul dazed by love and sorrow,  
cheer thy mood ;

More blest art thou than mortal  
tongue can tell :

Ring not thy funeral but thy  
marriage bell,  
And salt with hope thy life's insipid  
food.

Love is the goal, love is the way we  
wend,

Love is our parallel unending line  
Whose only perfect Parallel is  
Christ,

Beginning not begun, End without  
end :

For He Who hath the Heart  
of God sufficed

Can satisfy all hearts,—yea, thine  
and mine.

## 8

We feel and see with different hearts  
and eyes :—

Ah Christ, if all our hearts could  
meet in Thee,

How well it were for them and  
well for me,

Our hearts Thy dear accepted sacri-  
fice.

Thou, only Life of hearts and Light  
of eyes,

Our life, our light, if once we turn  
to Thee,

So be it, O Lord, to them and so  
to me ;

Be all alike Thine own dear sacrifice.

Thou Who by death hast ransomed  
us from death,

Thyself God's sole well-pleasing  
Sacrifice,

Thine only sacred Self I plead  
with Thee :

Make Thou it well for them  
and well for me

That Thou hast given us souls and  
wills and breath,

And hearts to love Thee, and to  
see Thine eyes.

## 9

Star Sirius and the Pole Star dwell  
afar

Beyond the drawings each of  
other's strength.

One blazes through the brief  
bright summer's length

Lavishing life-heat from a flaming  
car ;

While one unchangeable upon a  
throne

Broods o'er the frozen heart of  
earth alone,

Content to reign the bright particular  
star

Of some who wander or of some  
who groan.

They own no drawings each of  
other's strength,

Nor vibrate in a visible sympathy,  
Nor veer along their courses  
each toward each :

Yet are their orbits pitched in  
harmony

Of one dear heaven, across whose  
depth and length

Mayhap they talk together  
without speech.

## 10

Tread softly ! all the earth is holy  
ground.

It may be, could we look with  
seeing eyes,

This spot we stand on is a  
Paradise

Where dead have come to life and  
lost been found,

Where Faith has triumphed, Martyr-  
dom been crowned,

Where fools have foiled the wisdom  
of the wise ;

From this same spot the dust of  
saints may rise,  
And the King's prisoners come to  
light unbound.

O earth, earth, earth, hear thou thy  
Maker's Word :

'Thy dead thou shalt give up,  
nor hide thy slain.'

Some who went weeping forth  
shall come again

Rejoicing from the east or from  
the west,

As doves fly to their windows, love's  
own bird

Contented and desirous to the  
nest.<sup>1</sup>

## 11

Lifelong our stumbles, lifelong our  
regret,

Lifelong our efforts failing and  
renewed,

While lifelong is our witness, 'God  
is good,'

Who bore with us till now, bears  
with us yet,

Who still remembers and will not  
forget,

Who gives us light and warmth  
and daily food ;

And gracious promises half under-  
stood,

And glories half unveiled, whereon  
to set

Our heart of hearts and eyes of our  
desire ;

Uplifting us to longing and to  
love,

Luring us upward from this world  
of mire,

<sup>1</sup> 'Quali colombe dal disio chiamate  
Con l'ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido  
Volan per l'aer dal voler portate.'



Urging us to press on and mount  
above  
Ourselves and all we have had  
experience of,  
Mounting to Him in love's perpetual  
fire.

## 12

A dream there is wherein we are  
fain to scream,  
While struggling with ourselves  
we cannot speak :  
And much of all our waking life,  
as weak  
And misconceived, eludes us like  
the dream.  
For half life's seemings are not what  
they seem,  
And vain the laughs we laugh,  
the shrieks we shriek ;  
Yea, all is vain that mars the  
settled meek  
Contented quiet of our daily theme.  
When I was young I deemed that  
sweets are sweet :  
But now I deem some searching  
bitters are  
Sweeter than sweets, and more  
refreshing far,  
And to be relished more, and  
more desired,  
And more to be pursued on eager  
feet,  
On feet untired, and still on feet  
though tired.

## 13

Shame is a shadow cast by sin : yet  
shame  
Itself may be a glory and a grace,  
Refashioning the sin-disfashioned  
face ;  
A nobler bruit than hollow-sounded  
fame,

A new-lit lustre on a tarnished name,  
One virtue pent within an evil  
place,  
Strength for the fight, and swift-  
ness for the race,  
A stinging salve, a life-requickening  
flame.  
A salve so searching we may scarcely  
live,  
A flame so fierce it seems that we  
must die,  
An actual cautery thrust into  
the heart :  
Nevertheless, men die not of  
such smart ;  
And shame gives back what nothing  
else can give,  
Man to himself,—then sets him  
up on high.

## 14

When Adam and when Eve left  
Paradise,  
Did they love on and cling to-  
gether still,  
Forgiving one another all that ill  
The twain had wrought on such a  
different wise ?  
She propped upon his strength, and  
he in guise  
Of lover though of lord, girt to  
fulfil  
Their term of life and die when  
God should will ;  
Lie down and sleep, and having  
slept arise.  
Boast not against us, O our enemy !  
To-day we fall, but we shall rise  
again ;  
We grope to-day, to-morrow we shall  
see :  
What is to-day that we should fear  
to-day ?

A morrow cometh which shall sweep  
away  
Thee and thy realm of change and  
death and pain.

## 15

Let woman fear to teach and bear to  
learn,

Remembering the first woman's  
first mistake.

Eve had for pupil the inquiring  
snake,

Whose doubts she answered on a  
great concern ;

But he the tables so contrived to turn,  
It next was his to give and hers  
to take ;

Till man deemed poison sweet for  
her sweet sake,

And fired a train by which the world  
must burn.

Did Adam love his Eve from first to  
last ?

I think so ; as we love who works  
us ill,

And wounds us to the quick, yet  
loves us still.

Love pardons the unpardonable past :  
Love in a dominant embrace holds  
fast

His frailer self, and saves without  
her will.

## 16

Our teachers teach that one and one  
make two :

Later, Love rules that one and  
one make one :

Abstruse the problems ! neither  
need we shun,

But skilfully to each should yield its  
due.

The narrower total seems to suit the  
few,

The wider total suits the common  
run ;

Each obvious in its sphere like  
moon or sun ;

Both provable by me, and both by  
you.

Befogged and witless, in a wordy maze  
A groping stroll perhaps may do  
us good ;

If cloyed we are with much we  
have understood,

If tired of half our dusty world and  
ways,

If sick of fasting, and if sick of  
food ;—

And how about these long still-  
lengthening days ?

## 17

Something this foggy day, a some-  
thing which

Is neither of this fog nor of to-day,  
Has set me dreaming of the winds  
that play

Past certain cliffs, along one certain  
beach,

And turn the topmost edge of  
waves to spray :

Ah pleasant pebbly strand so far  
away,

So out of reach while quite within  
my reach,

As out of reach as India or Cathay !

I am sick of where I am and where  
I am not,

I am sick of foresight and of  
memory,

I am sick of all I have and all I see,

I am sick of self, and there is  
nothing new ;

Oh weary impatient patience of my  
lot !—

Thus with myself : how fares it,  
Friends, with you ?

## 18

So late in Autumn half the world's  
 asleep,  
 And half the wakeful world looks  
 pinched and pale ;  
 For dampness now, not freshness,  
 rides the gale ;  
 And cold and colourless comes  
 ashore the deep  
 With tides that bluster or with  
 tides that creep ;  
 Now veiled uncouthness wears an  
 uncouth veil  
 Of fog, not sultry haze ; and blight  
 and bale  
 Have done their worst, and leaves  
 rot on the heap.  
 So late in Autumn one forgets the  
 Spring,  
 Forgets the Summer with its  
 opulence,  
 The callow birds that long have found  
 a wing,  
 The swallows that more lately gat  
 them hence :  
 Will anything like Spring, will any-  
 thing  
 Like Summer, rouse one day the  
 slumbering sense ?

## 19

Here now is Winter. Winter, after all,  
 Is not so drear as was my boding  
 dream  
 While Autumn gleamed its latest  
 watery gleam  
 On sapless leafage too inert to fall.  
 Still leaves and berries clothe my  
 garden wall  
 Where ivy thrives on scantiest  
 sunny beam ;  
 Still here a bud and there a  
 blossom seem  
 Hopeful, and robin still is musical.

Leaves, flowers, and fruit, and one  
 delightful song,  
 Remain ; these days are short, but  
 now the nights,  
 Intense and long, hang out their  
 utmost lights ;  
 Such starry nights are long, yet not  
 too long ;  
 Frost nips the weak, while strengthen-  
 ing still the strong  
 Against that day when Spring sets  
 all to rights.

## 20

A hundred thousand birds salute the  
 day :—  
 One solitary bird salutes the night :  
 Its mellow grieving wiles our grief  
 away,  
 And tunes our weary watches to  
 delight ;  
 It seems to sing the thoughts we  
 cannot say,  
 To know and sing them, and to  
 set them right ;  
 Until we feel once more that May is  
 May,  
 And hope some buds may bloom  
 without a blight.  
 This solitary bird outweighs, outvies,  
 The hundred thousand merry-  
 making birds ;  
 Whose innocent warblings yet might  
 make us wise,  
 Would we but follow when they bid  
 us rise,  
 Would we but set their notes of  
 praise to words  
 And launch our hearts up with them  
 to the skies.

## 21

A host of things I take on trust : I take  
 The nightingales on trust, for few  
 and far

Between those actual summer  
moments are  
When I have heard what melody  
they make.  
So chanced it once at Como on the  
Lake :  
But all things, then, waxed musical ;  
each star  
Sang on its course, each breeze  
sang on its car,  
All harmonies sang to senses wide  
awake.  
All things in tune, myself not out of  
tune,  
Those nightingales were nightin-  
gales indeed :  
Yet truly an owl had satisfied my  
need,  
And wrought a rapture underneath  
that moon,  
Or simple sparrow chirping from  
a reed ;  
For June that night glowed like a  
doubled June.

22

The mountains in their overwhelming  
might  
Moved me to sadness when I saw  
them first,  
And afterwards they moved me to  
delight ;  
Struck harmonies from silent  
chords which burst  
Out into song, a song by memory  
nursed ;  
For ever unrenewed by touch or sight  
Sleeps the keen magic of each day  
or night,  
In pleasure and in wonder then  
immersed.  
All Switzerland behind us on the  
ascent,

All Italy before us, we plunged  
down  
St. Gothard, garden of forget-  
me-not :  
Yet why should such a flower  
choose such a spot ?  
Could we forget that way which once  
we went  
Though not one flower had  
bloomed to weave its crown ?

23

Beyond the seas we know stretch  
seas unknown,  
Blue and bright-coloured for our  
dim and green ;  
Beyond the lands we see stretch  
lands unseen  
With many-tinted tangle overgrown :  
And icebound seas there are like seas  
of stone,  
Serenely stormless as death lies  
serene ;  
And lifeless tracts of sand, which  
intervene  
Betwixt the lands where living flowers  
are blown.  
This dead and living world befits our  
case  
Who live and die : we live in  
wearied hope,  
We die in hope not dead ; we run a  
race  
To-day, and find no present halting-  
place ;  
All things we see lie far within  
our scope,  
And still we peer beyond with craving  
face.

24

The wise do send their hearts before  
them to  
Dear blessed Heaven, despite the  
veil between ;

The foolish nurse their hearts  
within the screen  
Of this familiar world, where all we do  
Or have is old, for there is nothing  
new :

Yet elder far that world we have  
not seen ;

God's Presence antedates what  
else hath been :

Many the foolish seem, the wise  
seem few.

Oh foolishlest fond folly of a heart  
Divided, neither here nor there at  
rest !

That hankers after Heaven, but  
clings to earth ;

That neither here nor there  
knows thorough mirth,  
Half-choosing, wholly missing, the  
good part :—

Oh fool among the foolish, in thy  
quest !

25

When we consider what this life we  
lead

Is not, and is : how full of toil  
and pain,

How blank of rest and of sub-  
stantial gain,

Beset by hunger earth can never feed,  
And propping half our hearts upon  
a reed ;

We cease to mourn lost treasures,  
mourned in vain,

Lost treasures we are fain and yet  
not fain

To fetch back for a solace of our need.  
For who that feel this burden and  
this strain,

This wide vacuity of hope and  
heart,

Would bring their cherished well-  
beloved again :

R

To bleed with them and wince  
beneath the smart,

To have with stinted bliss such lavish  
bane,

To hold in lieu of all so poor a  
part ?

26

This Life is full of numbness and of  
balk,

Of haltingness and baffled short-  
coming,

Of promise unfulfilled, of every-  
thing

That is puffed vanity and empty talk :  
Its very bud hangs cankered on the  
stalk,

Its very song-bird trails a broken  
wing,

Its very Spring is not indeed like  
Spring,

But sighs like Autumn round an  
aimless walk.

This Life we live is dead for all its  
breath ;

Death's self it is, set off on  
pilgrimage,

Travelling with tottering steps the  
first short stage :

The second stage is one mere  
desert dust

Where Death sits veiled amid  
creation's rust :—

Unveil thy face, O Death who art  
not Death.

27

I have dreamed of Death :—what  
will it be to die

Not in a dream, but in the literal  
truth,

With all Death's adjuncts ghastly  
and uncouth,

The pang that is the last and the  
last sigh ?

G

Too dulled, it may be, for a last  
good-bye,

Too comfortless for any one to  
soothe,

A helpless charmless spectacle of  
ruth

Through long last hours, so long  
while yet they fly.

So long to those who hopeless in  
their fear

Watch the slow breath and look  
for what they dread :

While I supine with ears that cease  
to hear,

With eyes that glaze, with heart-  
pulse running down

(Alas ! no saint rejoicing on her bed),

May miss the goal at last, may miss  
a crown.

28

In life our absent friend is far away :  
But death may bring our friend  
exceeding near,

Show him familiar faces long so  
dear

And lead him back in reach of words  
we say.

He only cannot utter yea or nay

In any voice accustomed to our  
ear ;

He only cannot make his face  
appear

And turn the sun back on our  
shadowed day.

The dead may be around us, dear  
and dead ;

The unforgotten dearest dead may  
be

Watching us with unslumbering  
eyes and heart,

Brimful of words which cannot yet  
be said,

Brimful of knowledge they may  
not impart,

Brimful of love for you and love  
for me.

*Before 1882.*

## JUVENILIA

### TO MY MOTHER

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HER  
BIRTH

(Presented with a Nosegay)

TO-DAY'S your natal day ;

Sweet flowers I bring :

Mother, accept I pray

My offering.

And may you happy live,

And long us bless ;

Receiving as you give

Great happiness.

*27 April 1842.*

### THE CHINAMAN

'CENTRE of Earth !' a Chinaman  
he said,

And bent over a map his pig-tailed  
head,—

That map in which, portrayed in  
colours bright,

China, all dazzling, burst upon the  
sight ;

'Centre of Earth !' repeatedly he  
cries,

'Land of the brave, the beautiful,  
the wise !'



Thus he exclaimed ; when lo his  
words arrested  
wed what sharp agony his head  
had tested.

feels a tug—another, and  
another—

And quick exclaims, ‘Hallo ! what’s  
now the bother ?’

But soon, alas, perceives. And, ‘Why,  
false night,

Why not from men shut out the  
hateful sight ?

The faithless English have cut off  
my tail,

And left me my sad fortunes to  
bewail.

Now in the streets I can no more  
appear,

For all the other men a pig-tail wear.’

He said, and furious cast into the fire  
His tail : those flames became its  
funeral-pyre.

1842.

### HYMN

To the God who reigns on high,

To the Eternal Majesty,

To the Blessed Trinity,

Glory on earth be given,

In the sea and in the sky,

And in the highest heaven.

2 July 1843.

### LOVE AND HOPE

LOVE for ever dwells in  
heaven,—

Hope entereth not there.

To despairing man Love’s  
given,—

Hope dwells not with despair.  
Love reigneth high, and reigneth low,  
and reigneth everywhere.

In the inmost heart Love  
dwelleth,—

It may not quenched be ;

E’en when the life-blood welleteth,

Its fond effects we see

In the name that leaves the lips the  
last — fades last from  
memory.

And when we shall awaken,

Ascending to the sky,

Though Hope shall have  
forsaken,

Sweet Love shall never die :

For perfect Love and perfect bliss  
shall be our lot on high.

9 October 1843.

### ON ALBINA

THE roses lingered in her cheeks

When fair Albina fainted ;

O gentle reader, could it be

That fair Albina painted ?

June 1844.

### FORGET ME NOT

‘FORGET me not, forget me not !’

The maiden once did say,

When to some far-off battlefield

Her lover sped away.

‘Forget me not, forget me not !’

Says now the chamber-maid,

When the traveller on his journey

No more will be delayed.

19 August 1844.

## CHARITY

I PRAISED the myrtle and the rose,  
 At sunrise in their beauty lying :  
 I passed them at the short day's  
     close,  
     And both were dying.

The summer sun his rays was  
 throwing  
 Brightly : yet ere I sought my  
     rest  
 His last cold ray, more deeply  
     glowing,  
     Died in the west.

After this bleak world's stormy  
 weather,  
 All, all, save Love alone, shall  
     die ;  
 For Faith and Hope shall merge  
     together  
     In Charity.

20 September 1844.

## EARTH AND HEAVEN

WATER calmly flowing,  
 Sunlight deeply glowing,  
 Swans some river riding  
 That is gently gliding  
 By the fresh green rushes,  
 The sweet rose that blushes,  
 Hyacinths whose dower  
 Is both scent and flower,  
 Skylark's soaring motion,  
 Sunrise from the ocean,  
 Jewels that lie sparkling  
 'Neath the waters darkling,  
 Seaweed, coral, amber,  
 Flowers that climb and clamber  
 Or more lowly flourish  
 Where the earth may nourish :

All these are beautiful,  
 Of beauty earth is full :  
 Say, to our promised heaven  
 Can greater charms be given ?  
 Yes, for aye in heaven doth dwell,  
 Glowing, indestructible,  
 What here below finds tainted  
     birth  
 In the corrupted sons of earth :  
 For, filling there and satisfying  
 Man's soul unchanging and un-  
     dying,  
 Earth's fleeting joys and beauties  
     far above,  
     In heaven is Love.

28 December 1844.

## LOVE EPHEMERAL

LOVE is sweet, and so are flowers  
 Blooming in bright summer bowers ;  
 So are waters, clear and pure,  
 In some hidden fountain's store ;  
 So is the soft southern breeze  
 Sighing low among the trees ;  
 So is the bright queen of heaven  
 Reigning in the quiet even.  
 Yet the pallid moon may breed  
 Madness in man's feeble seed ;  
 And the wind's soft influence  
 Often breathes the pestilence ;  
 And the waves may sullied be  
 As they hurry to the sea ;  
 Flowers soon must fade away :  
 Love endures but for a day.

25 February 1845.

## BURIAL ANTHEM

FLESH of our flesh, bone of our  
     bone—  
 For thou and we in Christ are one—  
 Thy soul unto its rest hath flown,

And thou hast left us all alone  
 Our weary race to run  
 In doubt and want and sin and  
 pain,  
 Whilst thou wilt never sin again.  
 For us remaineth heaviness ;  
 Thou never more shalt feel dis-  
 tress,—  
 For thou hast found repose  
 Beside the bright eternal river,  
 That clear and pure flows on for ever  
 And sings as on it flows.  
 And it is better far for thee  
 To reach at once thy rest  
 Than share with us earth's misery,  
 Or tainted joy at best.  
 Brother, we will not mourn for thee,  
 Although our hearts be weary  
 Of struggling with our enemy  
 When all around is dreary :  
 But we will pray that still we may  
 Press onward in the narrow way,  
 With a calm thankful resignation,  
 And joy in this our desolation ;  
 And we will hope at length to be  
 With our Great Head—and, friend,  
 with thee—

Beside that river blest.

3 March 1845.

# LINES TO MY GRANDFATHER

DEAR Grandpapa,—To be obedient,  
 I'll try and write a letter ;  
 Which (as I hope you'll deem ex-  
 pedient)  
 Must serve for lack of better.

My Muse of late was not prolific ;  
 And sometimes I must feel  
 To make a verse a task terrific  
 Rather of woe than weal.

As I have met with no adventure  
 Of wonder and refulgence,  
 I must write plain things at a  
 venture,  
 And trust to your indulgence.

The apple-tree is showing  
 Its blossom of bright red,  
 With a soft colour glowing  
 Upon its leafy bed.

The pear-tree's pure white blossom  
 Like stainless snow is seen ;  
 And all earth's genial bosom  
 Is clothed with varied green.

The fragrant may is blooming,  
 The yellow cowslip blows ;  
 Among its leaves entombing  
 Peeps forth the pale primrose.

The king-cup flowers and daisies  
 Are opening hard by ;  
 And many another raises  
 Its head, to please and die.

I love the gay wild flowers  
 Waving in fresh Spring air :—  
 Give me uncultured bowers  
 Before the bright parterre.

And now my letter is concluded ;  
 To do well I have striven ;  
 And, though news is well-nigh ex-  
 cluded,  
 I hope to be forgiven.

With love to all the beautiful  
 And those who cannot slaughter,  
 I sign myself—Your dutiful  
 Affectionate grand-daughter.

1 May 1845.

## SUMMER

HARK to the song of greeting!  
 The tall trees  
 Murmur their welcome in the  
 southern breeze;  
 Amid the thickest foliage many a  
 bird

Sits singing, their shrill matins  
 scarcely heard

One by one, but all together  
 Welcoming the sunny weather;  
 In every bower hums a bee  
 Fluttering melodiously;  
 Murmurs joy in every brook,  
 Rippling with a pleasant look:  
 What greet they with their guile-  
 less bliss?

What welcome with a song like  
 this?

See in the south a radiant form,  
 Her fair head crowned with  
 roses;

From her bright footpath flies the  
 storm;

Upon her breast reposes  
 Many an unconfined tress,  
 Golden, glossy, motionless.  
 Face and form are love and light,  
 Soft ineffably, yet bright.  
 All her path is strewn with flowers;  
 Round her float the laughing Hours;  
 Heaven and Earth make joyful din,  
 Welcoming sweet Summer in.

And now she alights on the earth  
 To play with her children the  
 flowers;

She touches the stems, and the buds  
 have birth,  
 And gently she trains them in  
 bowers.

And the bees and the birds are  
 glad,

And the wind catches warmth  
 from her breath,

And around her is nothing sad  
 Nor any traces of death.

See now she lays her down  
 With roses for her crown,  
 With jessamine and myrtle  
 Forming her fragrant kirtle.

Conquered by softest slumbers,  
 No more the hours she numbers—  
 The hours that intervene

Ere she may wing her flight  
 Far from this smiling scene

With all her love and light,  
 And leave the flowers and the  
 summer bowers

To wither in autumn and winter  
 hours.

And must they wither then?

Their life and their perfume  
 Sinking so soon again

Into their earthy tomb.

Let us bind her as she lies  
 Ere the fleeting moment flies,  
 Hand and foot and arm and bosom,  
 With a chain of bud and blossom;  
 Twine red roses round her hands;  
 Round her feet twine myrtle bands.  
 Heap up flowers, higher, higher,—  
 Tulips like a glowing fire,  
 Clematis of milky whiteness,  
 Sweet geraniums' varied brightness,  
 Honeysuckle, commeline,  
 Roses, myrtles, jessamine;  
 Heap them higher, bloom on bloom,  
 Bury her as in a tomb.

But alas they are withered all,  
 And how can dead flowers  
 bind her?

She pushes away her pall,

And she leaves the dead behind  
her :

And she flies across the seas,  
To gladden for a time  
The blossoms and the bees  
Of some far-distant clime.

4 December 1845.

### SERENADE

COME, wander forth with me : the  
orange flowers

Breathe faintest perfume from the  
summer bowers.

Come, wander forth with me : the  
moon on high

Shines proudly in a flood of brilliancy;  
Around her car each burning star  
Gleams like a beacon from afar.  
The night wind scarce disturbs  
the sea

As it sighs forth so languidly,  
Laden with sweetness like a bee ;  
And all is still, below, above,  
Save murmurs of the turtle-dove  
That murmurs ever of its love.

For now 'tis the hour, the balmy  
hour,

When the strains of love have  
chiefly power ;

When the maid looks forth from  
her latticed bower,

With a gentle yielding smile,  
Donning her mantle all the while.

Now the moon beams down on  
high

From her halo brilliantly,  
By the dark clouds unencumbered

That once o'er her pale face  
slumbered :

Far from her mild rays flutters  
Folly,

For on them floats calm Melan-  
choly ;—

A passionless sadness without  
dread,

Like the thought of those we love,  
long dead ;

Full of hope and chastened joy,  
Heavenly, without earth's alloy.

Listen, dearest : all is quiet—

Slumbering the world's toil and  
riot ;

And all is fair in earth and sky and  
sea.

Come, wander forth with me.

4 December 1845.

### THE END OF TIME

THOU who art dreary

With a cureless woe,

Thou who art weary

Of all things below,

Thou who art weeping

By the loved sick bed,

Thou who art keeping

Watches o'er the dead,—

Hope, hope ! old Time flies fast  
upon his way,

And soon will cease the night, and  
soon will dawn the day.

The rose blooms brightly,

But it fades ere night ;

And youth flies lightly,

Yet how sure its flight !

And still the river

Merges in the sea ;

And Death reigns ever

Whilst old Time shall be ;—

Yet hope ! old Time flies fast upon  
his way,

And soon will cease the night, and  
soon will dawn the day.

All we most cherish

In this world below,

What though it perish ?  
 It has aye been so.  
 So through all ages  
 It has ever been,  
 To fools and sages,  
 Noble men and mean :—  
 Yet hope, still hope ! for Time  
 flies on his way,  
 And soon will end the night, and  
 soon will dawn the day.

All of each nation  
 Shall that morning see  
 With exultation  
 Or with misery :  
 From watery slumbers,  
 From the opening sod,  
 Shall rise up numbers  
 To be judged by God.  
 Then hope and fear, for Time  
 speeds on his way,  
 And soon must end the night, and  
 soon must dawn the day.

9 December 1845.

### COUPLET

‘COME cheer up, my lads, ’tis to  
 glory we steer’—  
 As the soldier remarked whose post  
 lay in the rear.

Circa 1845.

### AMORE E DOVERE

CHIAMI il mio core  
 Crudele, altero :  
 No non è vero,  
 Crudel non è :  
 T’ amo, t’ amai—  
 E tu lo sai—  
 Men del dovere,  
 Ma più di me.

O ruscelletto,  
 Dì al Dio d’ Amore  
 Che questo petto,  
 Che questo core,  
 A lui ricetto  
 Più non darà.  
 L’ alme tradisce  
 Senza rimorso ;  
 Non compatisce,  
 Non dà soccorso,  
 E si nudrisce  
 Di crudeltà.—

T’ intendo, ti lagni,  
 Mio povero core ;  
 T’ intendo, l’ Amore  
 Si lagna di me.  
 Deh placati alfine !  
 Mi pungon le spine  
 Che vengon da te.

1845 to 1847.

### MOTHER AND CHILD

‘WHAT art thou thinking of,’ said  
 the mother,

‘What art thou thinking of, my  
 child?’

‘I was thinking of heaven,’ he  
 answered her,

And looked up in her face and  
 smiled.

‘And what didst thou think of  
 heaven?’ she said ;

‘Tell me, my little one.’

‘Oh I thought that there the flowers  
 never fade,

That there never sets the sun.’

‘And wouldst thou love to go thither,  
 my child,

Thither wouldst thou love to go,



And leave the pretty flowers that  
wither,  
And the sun that sets below ?'

'Oh I would be glad to go there,  
mother,  
To go and live there now ;  
And I would pray for thy coming,  
mother ;—  
My mother, wouldst not thou ?'

10 January 1846.

### MARY MAGDALENE

SHE came in deep repentance,  
And knelt down at His feet  
Who can change the sorrow into joy,  
The bitter into sweet.

She had cast away her jewels  
And her rich attire,  
And her breast was filled with a holy  
shame,  
And her heart with a holy fire.

Her tears were more precious  
Than her precious pearls—  
Her tears that fell upon His feet  
As she wiped them with her curls.

Her youth and her beauty  
Were budding to their prime ;  
But she wept for the great trans-  
gression,  
The sin of other time.

Trembling betwixt hope and fear,  
She sought the King of Heaven,  
Forsook the evil of her ways,  
Loved much, and was forgiven.

8 February 1846.

### ON THE DEATH OF A CAT

A FRIEND OF MINE AGED TEN  
YEARS AND A HALF

WHO shall tell the lady's grief  
When her Cat was past relief ?  
Who shall number the hot tears  
Shed o'er her, belov'd for years ?  
Who shall say the dark dismay  
Which her dying caused that day ?

Come, ye Muses, one and all,  
Come obedient to my call ;  
Come and mourn with tuneful breath  
Each one for a separate death ;  
And, while you in numbers sigh,  
I will sing her elegy.

Of a noble race she came,  
And Grimalkin was her name.  
Young and old full many a mouse  
Felt the prowess of her house ;  
Weak and strong full many a rat  
Cowered beneath her crushing pat ;  
And the birds around the place  
Shrank from her too close embrace.  
But one night, reft of her strength,  
She lay down and died at length :  
Lay a kitten by her side  
In whose life the mother died.  
Spare her line and lineage,  
Guard her kitten's tender âge,  
And that kitten's name as wide  
Shall be known as hers that died.  
And whoever passes by  
The poor grave where Puss doth  
lie,  
Softly, softly let him tread,  
Nor disturb her narrow bed.

14 March 1846.

## TO ELIZABETH READ

WITH SOME POSTAGE-STAMPS FOR  
A COLLECTION

SWEETEST Elizabeth, accept, I pray,  
These lowly stamps I send in  
homage true :

One hundred humble servants in  
their way

Are not to be despised, though  
poor to view.

Their livery of red and black—nor  
gay

Nor sober all—is typical of you,  
In whom are gravity and gladness  
mixt :

Thought here, smiles there—per-  
fection lies betwixt.

17 March 1846.

## LOVE ATTACKED

LOVE is more sweet than flowers,

But sooner dying ;

Warmer than sunny hours,

But faster flying ;

Softer than music whispers,

Springing with day,

To murmur till the vespers,

Then die away ;

More kind than friendship's greeting,

But as untrue ;

Brighter than hope, but fleeting

More swiftly too.

Like breath of summer breezes

Gently it sighs,

But soon alas one ceases,

The other dies :

And like an inundation

It leaves behind

An utter desolation

Of heart and mind.

Who then would court Love's  
presence,

If here below

It can but be the essence

Of restless woe ?

Returned or unrequited,

'Tis still the same ;

The flame was never lighted,

Or sinks the flame.

Yet all, both fools and sages,

Have felt its power,

In distant lands and ages,—

Here, at this hour.

Then what from fear and weeping

Shall give me rest ?

Oh tell me, ye who sleeping

At length are blest !

In answer to my crying,

Sounds like incense

Rose from the earth, replying,

'Indifference.'

21 April 1846.

## LOVE DEFENDED

WHO extols a wilderness ?

Who hath praised indifference ?

Foolish one, thy words are sweet,

But devoid of sense.

As the man who ne'er hath seen,

Or as he who cannot hear,

Is the heart that hath no part

In Love's hope and fear.

True, the blind do not perceive  
The unsightly things around ;  
True, the deaf man trembleth not  
At an awful sound.

But the face of heaven and earth,  
And the murmur of the main,  
Surely are a recompense  
For a little pain.

So, though Love may not be free  
Always from a taint of grief,  
If its sting is very sharp,  
Great is its relief.

23 April 1846.

### THE MARTYR

SEE, the sun hath risen—  
Lead her from the prison ;

She is young and tender,—lead her  
tenderly :

May no fear subdue her,  
Lest the saints be fewer—

Lest her place in heaven be lost  
eternally.

Forth she came, not trem-  
bling,

No nor yet dissembling

An o'erwhelming terror weighing her  
down, down ;

Little, little heeding

Earth, but inly pleading

For the strength to triumph and to  
win a crown.

All her might was rallied  
To her heart ; not pallid

Was her cheek, but glowing with a  
glorious red ;

Glorious red and saintly,

Never paling faintly,

But still flushing, kindling still, with-  
out thought of dread.

On she went, on faster,  
Trusting in her Master,  
Feeling that His eye watched o'er  
her lovingly ;

He would prove and try her,  
But would not deny her  
When her soul had past, for His  
sake, patiently.

'Christ,' she said, 'receive  
me,—

Let no terrors grieve me,—

Take my soul and guard it with Thy  
heavenly cares :

Take my soul and guard it,—

Take it and reward it

With the love Thou bearest for the  
love it bears.'

Quickened with a fire  
Of sublime desire,

She looked up to heaven, and she  
cried aloud :

'Death, I do entreat thee,

Come ! I go to meet thee ;

Wrap me in the whiteness of a virgin  
shroud.'

On she went, hope-laden—

Happy, happy maiden !

Never more to tremble, and to weep  
no more :

All her sins forgiven,

Straight the path to heaven,

Through the glowing fire, lay her  
feet before.

On she went, on quickly,

And her breath came thickly,

With the longing to see God coming  
pantingly :

Now the fire is kindled,

And her flesh has dwindled

Unto dust ;—her soul is mounting up  
on high :

Higher, higher mounting,  
 The swift moments counting,—  
 Fear is left beneath her, and the  
 chastening rod :  
 Tears no more shall blind  
 her ;  
 Trouble lies behind her ;  
 Satisfied with hopeful rest, and replete  
 with God.

24 May 1846.

### THE DYING MAN TO HIS BETROTHED

ONE word—'tis all I ask of thee ;  
 One word—and that is little now  
 That I have learned thy wrong of me ;  
 And thou too art unfaithful—thou !  
 O thou sweet poison, sweetest death,  
 O honey between serpent's teeth,  
 Breathe on me with thy scorching  
 breath !

The last poor hope is fleeting now,  
 And with it life is ebbing fast ;  
 I gaze upon thy cold white brow,  
 And loathe and love thee to the  
 last.

And still thou keepest silence,—still  
 Thou look'st on me : for good or ill  
 Speak out, that I may know thy will.

Thou weepest, woman, and art pale :  
 Weep not, for thou shalt soon be  
 free ;

My life is ending like a tale  
 That was but never more shall be.  
 O blessed moments, ye fleet fast,  
 And soon the latest shall be past,  
 And she will be content at last.

Nay, tremble not, I have not curst  
 Thy house or mine, or thee or me.  
 The moment that I saw thee first,  
 The moment that I first loved  
 thee,—

Curse *them* ?—Alas I can but bless  
 In this mine hour of heaviness :—  
 Nay, sob not so in thy distress.

I have been harsh, thou say'st of me ;—  
 God knows my heart was never so ;  
 It never could be so to thee.

And now it is too late—I know  
 Thy grief—forgive me, love, 'tis o'er ;  
 For I shall never trouble more  
 Thy life that was so calm before.

I pardon thee ; mayst thou be blest !  
 Say, wilt thou sometimes think of  
 me ?

Oh may I, from my happy rest,  
 Still look with love on thine and  
 thee,—

And may I pray for thee alway,  
 And for thy love still may I pray,  
 Waiting the everlasting day !

Stoop over me ;—ah this is death !  
 I scarce can see thee at my side :  
 Stoop lower ; let me feel thy breath,  
 O thou, mine own, my promised  
 bride !

Pardon me, love ;—I pardon thee :  
 And may our pardon sealèd be  
 Throughout the long eternity.

The pains of death my senses cover  
 Oh for His sake who died for men,  
 Be thou more true to this thy lover  
 Than thou hast been to me :  
 Amen.

And, if he chide thee wrongfully,  
 One little moment think on me,  
 And thou wilt bear it patiently.

And now, O God, I turn to Thee :  
 Thou only, Father, canst not fail :  
 Lord, Thou hast tried and broken  
 me,  
 And yet Thy mercy shall prevail.  
 Saviour, through Thee I am for-  
 given ;—  
 Do Thou receive my soul, blood-  
 shriven,  
 O Christ, who art the Gate of  
 Heaven !

14 July 1846.

### LISSETTA ALL' AMANTE

PERDONA al primo eccesso  
 D' un tenero dolore ;  
 A te promisi il core,  
 E vo' serbarlo a te.  
 Ma dimmi e mi consola :  
 M' ami tu ancor, cor mio ?  
 Se a te fedel son io,  
 Sarai fedele a me ?

Chè se nell' alma ingrata  
 Pensi ad abbandonarmi,  
 Anch' io saprò scordarmi  
 D' un amator crudel.  
 Ma crederlo non voglio,  
 Ma non lo vo' pensare ;  
 Chè nol potrei lasciare,  
 Chè gli sarei fedel.

Folkestone, 11 August 1846.

### THE DEAD BRIDE

THERE she lay so still and pale,  
 With her bridal robes around her :  
 Joy is fleeting, life is frail,  
 Death had found her.

Gone for ever : gone away  
 From the love and light of earth ;  
 Gone for ever : who shall say  
 Where her second birth ?

Had her life been good and kind ?  
 Had her heart been meek and  
 pure ?  
 Was she of a lowly mind,  
 Ready to endure ?

Did she still console the sad,  
 Soothe the widow's anguish wild,  
 Make the poor and needy glad,  
 Tend the orphan child ?

Who shall say what hope and fear  
 Crowded in her short life's span ?  
 If the love of God was dear,  
 Or the love of man ?

Happy bride if single-hearted  
 Her first love to God was given ;  
 If from this world she departed  
 But to dwell in heaven ;

If her faith on heaven was fixed  
 And her hope ; if charity  
 Filled her full of light unmixed  
 With earth's vanity.

But alas, if tainted pleasure  
 Won her heart and held it here,  
 Where is now her failing treasure,  
 All her gladness where ? . . .

Hush, too curious questioner ;  
 Hush, and think thine own sins  
 o'er.  
 Little canst thou learn from her ;  
 For we know no more

Than that there she lies all pale  
 With her bridal robes around her :  
 Joy is fleeting—life is frail—  
 Death hath found her.  
 Folkestone, 10 September 1846.

# WILL THESE HANDS NE'ER BE CLEAN?

AND who is this lies prostrate at thy  
 feet ?

And is he dead, thou man of wrath  
 and pride ?

Yes, now thy vengeance is complete,  
 Thy hate is satisfied.

What had he done to merit this of  
 thee ?

Who gave thee power to take away  
 his life ?

O deeply-rooted direful enmity  
 That ended in long strife !

See where he grasped thy mantle as  
 he fell,

Staining it with his blood ; how  
 terrible

Must be the payment due for this in  
 hell !

And dost thou think to go and see  
 no more

Thy bleeding victim, now the  
 struggle's o'er ?

To find out peace in other lands,  
 And wash the red mark from thy  
 hands ?

It shall not be ; for everywhere  
 He shall be with thee ; and the air  
 Shall smell of blood, and on the  
 wind

His groans pursue thee close  
 behind.

When waking he shall stand before  
 thee ;

And when at length sleep shall  
 come o'er thee,

Powerless to move, alive to dream,  
 So dreadful shall thy visions seem  
 That thou shalt own them even  
 to be

More hateful than reality.

What time thou stoapest down to  
 drink

Of limpid waters, thou shalt think  
 It is thy foe's blood bubbles up  
 From the polluted fountain's cup,  
 That stains thy lip, that cries to  
 heaven

For vengeance—and it shall be  
 given.

And when thy friends shall question  
 thee,

'Why art thou changed so  
 heavily ?'

Trembling and fearful shalt thou  
 say

'I am not changed,' and turn  
 away ;

For such an outcast thou shalt be  
 Thou wilt not dare ask sympathy.

And so thy life will pass, and day  
 by day

The current of existence flow away ;  
 And, though to thee earth shall be  
 hell and breath

Vengeance, yet thou shalt tremble  
 more at death.

And one by one thy friends will  
 learn to fear thee,

And thou shalt live without a hope  
 to cheer thee ;

Lonely amid a thousand, chained  
 though free,

The curse of memory shall cling to  
 thee :



Ages may pass away, worlds rise  
and set—

But thou shalt not forget.

Folkestone, 16 September 1846.

### GONE FOR EVER

O HAPPY rosebud blooming  
Upon thy parent tree,  
Nay, thou art too presuming ;  
For soon the earth entombing  
Thy faded charms shall be,  
And the chill damp consuming.

O happy skylark springing  
Up to the broad blue sky,  
Too fearless in thy winging,  
Too gladsome in thy singing,  
Thou also soon shalt lie  
Where no sweet notes are ringing.

And through life's shine and shower  
We shall have joy and pain :  
But in the summer bower  
And at the morning hour  
We still shall look in vain  
For the same bird and flower.  
14 October 1846.

### PRESENT AND FUTURE

WHAT is life that we should love it,  
Cherishing it evermore,  
Never prizing aught above it,  
Ever loth to give it o'er ?  
Is it goodness ? is it gladness ?  
Nay, 'tis more of sin and sadness ;  
Nay, of weariness 'tis more.

Earthly joys are very fleeting,  
Earthly sorrows very long ;  
Parting ever follows meeting,  
Night succeeds to evensong.

Storms may darken in the morning  
And eclipse the sun's bright dawning,  
And the chilly gloom prolong.

But, though clouds may screen and  
hide it,  
The sun shines for evermore.  
Then bear grief in hope : abide it,  
Knowing that it must give o'er :  
And the darkness shall flee from us,  
And the sun beam down upon us  
Ever glowing more and more.  
5 November 1846.

### THE TIME OF WAITING

LIFE is fleeting, joy is fleeting,  
Coldness follows love and greeting,  
Parting still succeeds to meeting.

If I say ' Rejoice to-day,'  
Sorrow meets me in the way :  
I cannot my will obey.

If I say ' My grief shall cease ;  
Now then I will live in peace ' :  
My cares instantly increase.

When I look up to the sky,  
Thinking to see light on high,  
Clouds my searching glance defy.

When I look upon the earth  
For the flowers that should have  
birth,  
I find dreariness and dearth.

And the winds sigh on for ever,  
Murmurs still the flowing river,  
On the graves the sunbeams quiver.

And destruction waxeth bold,  
And the earth is growing old,  
And I tremble in the cold.

And my weariness increases  
To an ache that never ceases  
And a pain that ne'er decreases.

And the times are turbulent,  
And the Holy Church is rent,  
And who tremble or repent?

And loud cries do ever rise  
To the portals of the skies  
From our earthly miseries;

From love slighted, not requited;  
From high hope that should have  
    lighted  
All our path up, now benighted;

From the woes of humankind;  
From the darkness of the mind;  
From all anguish undefined;

From the heart that's crushed and  
    sinking;  
From the brain grown blank with  
    thinking;  
From the spirit sorrow drinking.

All cry out with pleading strong:  
'Vengeance, Lord! how long, how  
    long  
Shall we suffer this great wrong?'

And the pleading and the cry  
Of earth's sons are heard on high,  
And are noted verily.

When this world shall be no more,  
The oppressors shall endure  
The great vengeance which is sure.

And the sinful shall remain  
To an endless death and pain;  
But the good shall live again,—

Never more to be oppressed;  
Balm shall heal the bleeding breast,  
And the weary be at rest.

All shall vanish of dejection,  
Grief and fear and imperfection,  
In that glorious resurrection.

Heed not then a night of sorrow,  
If the dawning of the morrow  
From past grief fresh beams shall  
    borrow.

Thankful for whate'er is given,  
Strive we, as we ne'er have striven,  
For love's sake to be forgiven.

Then, the dark clouds opening,  
Even to us the sun shall bring  
Gladness, and sweet flowers shall  
    spring.

For Christ's guiding love alway,  
For the everlasting day,  
For meek patience, let us pray.

16 November 1846.

## TASSO AND LEONORA

A GLORIOUS vision hovers o'er his  
    soul,  
Gilding the prison and the weary  
    bed,—

Though hard the pillow placed  
    beneath his head,  
Though brackish be the water in the  
    bowl

Beside him; he can see the planets  
    roll

In glowing adoration, without  
    dread;

Knowing how, by unerring wisdom  
    led,

They struggle not against the strong  
    control.

When suddenly a star shoots from  
the skies,

Than all the other stars more  
purely bright,

Replete with heavenly loves and  
harmonies.

He starts :—what meets his full  
awakening sight ?

Lo ! Leonora, with large humid eyes,  
Gazing upon him in the misty light.

19 December 1846.

### LOVE

LOVE is all happiness, love is all  
beauty,

Love is the crown of flaxen heads  
and hoary ;

Love is the only everlasting duty ;

And love is chronicled in endless  
story,

And kindles endless glory.

24 February 1847.

### THE SOLITARY ROSE

O HAPPY rose, red rose, that bloom-  
est lonely

Where there are none to gather  
while they love thee ;

That art perfumed by thine own  
fragrance only,

Resting like incense round thee  
and above thee ;—

Thou hearest nought save some pure  
stream that flows,

O happy rose.

What though for thee no nightin-  
gales are singing ?

They chant one eve, but hush them  
in the morning.

Near thee no little moths and bees  
are winging

R

To steal thy honey when the day  
is dawning ;—

Thou keep'st thy sweetness till the  
twilight's close,

O happy rose.

Then rest in peace, thou lone and  
lovely flower ;

Yea be thou glad, knowing that  
none are near thee,

To mar thy beauty in a wanton hour,  
And scatter all thy leaves nor deign  
to wear thee.

Securely in thy solitude repose,

O happy rose.

15 March 1847.

### THE SONG OF THE STAR

I AM a Star dwelling on high

In the azure of the vaulted sky.

I shine on the land and I shine on  
the sea,

And the little breezes talk to me.

The waves rise towards me every one,

And forget the brightness of the sun ;

The growing grass springs up to-  
wards me,

And forgets the day's fertility.

My face is light, and my beam is life,

And my passionless being hath no  
strife.

In me no love is turned to hate,

No fullness is made desolate ;

Here is no hope, no fear, no grief,

Here is no pain and no relief ;

Nor birth nor death hath part in me,  
But a profound tranquillity.

The blossoms that bloomed yesterday

Unaltered shall bloom on to-day,

And on the morrow shall not fade.

Within the everlasting shade

The fountain gushing up for ever

Flows on to the eternal river,

H

That, running by a reedy shore,  
 Bubbles, bubbles evermore.  
 The happy birds sing in the trees  
 To the music of the southern breeze ;  
 And they fear no lack of food,  
 Chirping in the underwood ;  
 For ripe seeds and berried bushes  
 Serve the finches and the thrushes,  
 And all feathered fowls that dwell  
 In that shade majestic.  
 Beyond all clouds and all mistiness  
 I float in the strength of my loveliness.

And I move round the sun with a  
 measured motion  
 In the blue expanse of the skyey  
 ocean ;  
 And I hear the song of the angel  
 throng  
 In a river of ecstasy flow along,  
 Without a pausing, without a hushing,  
 Like an everlasting fountain's gushing

That of its own will bubbles up  
 From a white untainted cup.  
 Countless planets float round me,  
 Differing all in majesty ;  
 Smaller some, and some more great,  
 Amethystine, roseate,  
 Golden, silvery, glowing blue,  
 Hueless, and of every hue.  
 Each and all, both great and small,  
 With a cadence musical,  
 Shoot out rays of glowing praise  
 Never ending, but always  
 Hymning the Creator's might  
 Who hath filled them full of light ;  
 Pealing through eternity,  
 Filling out immensity ;  
 Sun and moon and stars together  
 In heights where is no cloudy weather ;  
 Where is nor storm nor mist nor  
 rain,  
 Where night goeth not to come again.

On and on and on for ever,  
 Never ceasing, sinking never,  
 Voiceless adorations rise  
 To the heaven above the skies.  
 We all chant with a holy harmony,  
 No discord marreth our melody ;  
 Here are no strifes nor envyings,  
 But each with love joyously sings,  
 For ever and ever floating free  
 In the azure light of infinity.

19 March 1847.

## RESURRECTION EVE

HE resteth : weep not ;  
 The living sleep not  
 With so much calm.  
     He hears no chiding  
     And no deriding,  
     Hath joy for sorrow,  
     For night hath morrow,  
 For wounds hath balm,  
 For life's strange riot  
 Hath death and quiet.  
 Who would recall him  
     Of those that love him ?  
 No fears appall him,  
 No ills befall him ;  
     There's nought above him  
 Save turf and flowers  
     And pleasant grass.  
 Pass the swift hours,  
     How swiftly pass !  
 The hours of slumber  
 He doth not number ;  
 Grey hours of morning  
 Ere the day's dawning ;  
 Brightened by gleams  
 Of the sunbeams,—  
 By the foreseeing  
     Of resurrection,  
 Of glorious being,  
     Of full perfection,

Of sins forgiven  
 Before the face  
 Of men and spirits ;  
 Of God in heaven,  
 The resting-place  
 That he inherits.

8 April 1847.

## THE DEAD CITY

ONCE I rambled in a wood  
 With a careless hardihood,  
 Heeding not the tangled way ;  
 Labyrinths around me lay,  
 But for them I never stood.

On, still on, I wandered on,  
 And the sun above me shone ;  
 And the birds around me winging  
 With their everlasting singing  
 Made me feel not quite alone.

In the branches of the trees  
 Murmured like the hum of bees  
 The low sound of happy breezes,  
 Whose sweet voice that never  
 ceases  
 Lulls the heart to perfect ease.

Streamlets bubbled all around  
 On the green and fertile ground,  
 Through the rushes and the grass,  
 Like a sheet of liquid glass,  
 With a soft and trickling sound.

And I went, I went on faster,  
 Contemplating no disaster ;  
 And I plucked ripe blackberries,  
 But the birds with envious eyes  
 Came and stole them from their  
 master.

For the birds here were all tame ;  
 Some with bodies like a flame ;  
 Some that glanced the branches  
 through,  
 Pure and colourless as dew ;  
 Fearlessly to me they came.

Before me no mortal stood  
 In the mazes of that wood ;  
 Before me the birds had never  
 Seen a man, but dwelt for ever  
 In a happy solitude :

Happy solitude, and blest  
 With beatitude of rest ;  
 Where the woods are ever vernal,  
 And the life and joy eternal,  
 Without death's or sorrow's test.

O most blessed solitude !  
 O most full beatitude !  
 Where are quiet without strife  
 And imperishable life,  
 Nothing marred and all things good.

And the bright sun, life-begetting,  
 Never rising, never setting,  
 Shining warmly overhead,  
 Nor too pallid nor too red,  
 Lulled me to a sweet forgetting—

Sweet forgetting of the time ;  
 And I listened for no chime  
 Which might warn me to be  
 gone ;  
 But I wandered on, still on,  
 'Neath the boughs of oak and lime.

Know I not how long I strayed  
 In the pleasant leafy shade ;  
 But the trees had gradually  
 Grown more rare, the air more  
 free,  
 The sun hotter overhead.

Soon the birds no more were seen  
 Glancing through the living green,  
 And a blight had passed upon  
 All the trees, and the pale sun  
 Shone with a strange lurid sheen.

Then a darkness spread around :  
 I saw nought ; I heard no sound :  
 Solid darkness overhead,  
 With a trembling cautious tread  
 Passed I o'er the unseen ground.

But at length a pallid light  
 Broke upon my searching sight ;  
 A pale solitary ray  
 Like a star at dawn of day  
 Ere the sun is hot and bright.

Towards its faintly glimmering beam  
 I went on as in a dream—  
 A strange dream of hope and  
 fear—  
 And I saw, as I drew near,  
 'Twas in truth no planet's gleam ;

But a lamp above a gate  
 Shone in solitary state,  
 O'er a desert drear and cold,  
 O'er a heap of ruins old,  
 O'er a scene most desolate.

By that gate I entered lone  
 A fair city of white stone ;  
 And a lovely light to see  
 Dawned, and spread most gradu-  
 ally,  
 Till the air grew warm and shone.

Through the splendid streets I strayed  
 In that radiance without shade ;  
 Yet I heard no human sound ;  
 All was still and silent round  
 As a city of the dead.

All the doors were open wide ;  
 Lattices on every side  
 In the wind swung to and fro—  
 Wind that whispered very low,  
 'Go and see the end of pride.'

With a fixed determination  
 Entered I each habitation ;  
 But they all were tenantless.  
 All was utter loneliness,  
 All was deathless desolation.

In the noiseless market-place  
 Was no careworn busy face ;  
 There were none to buy or sell,  
 None to listen or to tell,  
 In this silent emptiness.

Through the city on I went  
 Full of awe and wonderment.  
 Still the light around me shone,  
 And I wandered on, still on,  
 In my great astonishment.

Till at length I reached a place  
 Where amid an ample space  
 Rose a palace for a king ;  
 Golden was the turreting,  
 And of solid gold the base.

The great porch was ivory,  
 And the steps were ebony ;  
 Diamond and chrysoprase  
 Set the pillars in a blaze,  
 Capitalled with jewelry.

None was there to bar my way,  
 And the breezes seemed to say,  
 'Touch not these, but pass them  
 by,  
 Pressing onwards' ; therefore I  
 Entered in and made no stay.



All around was desolate.  
 I went on ; a silent state  
     Reigned in each deserted room,  
     And I hastened through the gloom  
 Till I reached an outer gate.

Soon a shady avenue,  
 Blossom-perfumed, met my view ;  
     Here and there the sunbeams fell  
     On pure founts whose sudden  
     swell  
 Up from marble basons flew.

Every tree was fresh and green ;  
 Not a withered leaf was seen  
     Through the veil of flowers and  
     fruit ;  
     Strong and sapful were the root,  
 The top boughs, and all between.

Vines were climbing everywhere  
 Full of purple grapes and fair ;  
     And far off I saw the corn  
     With its heavy head down borne  
 By the odour-laden air.

Who shall strip the bending vine ?  
 Who shall tread the press for wine ?  
     Who shall bring the harvest in  
     When the pallid ears begin  
 In the sun to glow and shine ?

On I went alone, alone,  
 Till I saw a tent that shone  
     With each bright and lustrous  
     hue ;  
     It was trimmed with jewels too,  
 And with flowers ; not one was gone.

Then the breezes whispered me :  
 'Enter in, and look, and see  
     How for luxury and pride  
     A great multitude have died.'  
 And I entered tremblingly.

Lo a splendid banquet laid  
 In the cool and pleasant shade.  
     Mighty tables everything  
     Of sweet Nature's furnishing  
 That was rich and rare displayed ;

And each strange and luscious cate  
 Practised art makes delicate ;  
     With a thousand fair devices  
     Full of odours and of spices ;  
 And a warm voluptuous state.

All the vessels were of gold,  
 Set with gems of worth untold.  
     In the midst a fountain rose  
     Of pure milk, whose rippling  
     flows  
 In a silver bason rolled.

In green emerald baskets were  
 Sun-red apples, streaked and fair ;  
     Here the nectarine and peach  
     And ripe plum lay, and on  
     each  
 The bloom rested everywhere.

Grapes were hanging overhead,  
 Purple, pale, and ruby-red ;  
     And in panniers all around  
     Yellow melons shone, fresh found,  
 With the dew upon them spread.

And the apricot and pear  
 And the pulpy fig were there,  
     Cherries and dark mulberries,  
     Bunchy currants, strawberries,  
 And the lemon wan and fair :

And unnumbered others too,  
 Fruits of every size and hue,  
     Juicy in their ripe perfection,  
     Cool beneath the cool reflection  
 Of the curtains' skyey blue.

All the floor was strewn with flowers  
 Fresh from sunshine and from  
   showers,  
   Roses, lilies, jessamine ;  
 And the ivy ran between,  
 Like a thought in happy hours.

And this feast too lacked no guest  
 With its warm delicious rest ;  
   With its couches softly sinking,  
 And its glow not made for thinking,  
 But for careless joy at best.

Many banqueters were there,  
 Wrinkled age, the young, the fair ;  
   In the splendid revelry  
   Flushing cheek and kindling eye  
 Told of gladness without care.

Yet no laughter rang around,  
 Yet they uttered forth no sound ;  
   With the smile upon his face  
   Each sat moveless in his place,  
 Silently, as if spellbound.

The low whispering voice was gone,  
 And I felt awed and alone.  
   In my great astonishment  
   To the feasters up I went—  
 Lo they all were turned to stone !

Yea they all were statue-cold,  
 Men and women, young and old ;  
   With the life-like look and smile  
   And the flush ; and all the while  
 The hard fingers kept their hold.

Here a little child was sitting  
 With a merry glance, befitting  
   Happy age and heedless heart ;  
   There a young man sat apart,  
 With a forward look unweeting.

Nigh them was a maiden fair,  
 And the ringlets of her hair  
   Round her slender fingers twined ;  
   And she blushed as she reclined,  
 Knowing that her love was there.

Here a dead man sat to sup,  
 In his hand a drinking-cup ;  
   Wine-cup of the heavy gold,  
   Human hand stony and cold,  
 And no life-breath struggling up.

There a mother lay and smiled  
 Down upon her infant child ;  
   Happy child and happy mother,  
   Laughing back to one another  
 With a gladness undefiled.

Here an old man slept, worn out  
 With the revelry and rout ;  
   Here a strong man sat and gazed  
   On a girl whose eyes upraised  
 No more wandered roundabout.

And none broke the stillness—none ;  
 I was the sole living one.  
   And methought that silently  
   Many seemed to look on me  
 With strange steadfast eyes that  
   shone.

Full of fear I would have fled ;  
 Full of fear I bent my head,  
   Shutting out each stony guest—  
   When I looked again, the feast  
 And the tent had vanished.

Yes, once more I stood alone  
 Where the happy sunlight shone,  
   And a gentle wind was sighing,  
   And the little birds were flying,  
 And the dreariness was gone.

All these things that I have said  
 Awed me and made me afraid.  
 What was I that I should see  
 So much hidden mystery?  
 And I straightway knelt and prayed.  
*9 April 1847.*

## THE ROSE

O ROSE, thou flower of flowers, thou  
 fragrant wonder,  
 Who shall describe thee in thy  
 ruddy prime,  
 Thy perfect fullness in the summer-  
 time,  
 When the pale leaves blushing  
 part asunder  
 And show the warm red heart lies  
 glowing under?  
 Thou shouldst bloom surely in  
 some sunny clime,  
 Untouched by blights and chilly  
 winter's rime,  
 Where lightnings never flash nor  
 peals the thunder.  
 And yet in happier spheres they  
 cannot need thee  
 So much as we do with our weight  
 of woe;  
 Perhaps they would not tend, perhaps  
 not heed thee,  
 And thou wouldst lonely and  
 neglected grow:  
 And He who is all wise, He hath  
 decreed thee  
 To gladden earth and cheer all  
 hearts below.

*17 April 1847.*

## SPRING QUIET

GONE were but the Winter,  
 Come were but the Spring,  
 I would go to a covert  
 Where the birds sing;

Where in the whitethorn  
 Singeth a thrush,  
 And a robin sings  
 In the holly-bush.

Full of fresh scents  
 Are the budding boughs  
 Arching high over  
 A cool green house;

Full of sweet scents,  
 And whispering air  
 Which sayeth softly:  
 'We spread no snare;

'Here dwell in safety,  
 Here dwell alone,  
 With a clear stream  
 And a mossy stone.

'Here the sun shineth  
 Most shadily;  
 Here is heard an echo  
 Of the far sea,  
 Though far off it be.'

*Towards May 1847.*

## I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

'WHO art thou that comest with a  
 steadfast face  
 Through the hushed arena to the  
 burying-place?'  
 'I am one whose footprints marked  
 upon the sand  
 Cry in blood for vengeance on a  
 guilty land.'

'How are these thy garments white  
 as whitest snow  
 Though thy blood hath touched them  
 in its overflow?'

'My blood cannot stain them, nor  
my tears make white;  
One than I more mighty, He hath  
made them bright.'

'Say, do thy wounds pain thee open  
every one,  
Wounds that now are glowing clearer  
than the sun?'

'Nay, they are my gladness un-  
alloyed by grief;  
Like a desert-fountain, or a long  
relief.'

'When the lion had thee in his  
deadly clasp,  
Was there then no terror in thy  
stifled gasp?'

'Though I felt the crushing, and  
the grinding teeth,  
He was with me ever, He who  
comforteth.'

'Didst thou hear the shouting, as  
of a great flood,  
Crying out for vengeance, crying out  
for blood?'

'I heard it in silence, and was not  
afraid,  
While for the mad people silently I  
prayed.'

'Did their hate not move thee? art  
thou heedless then  
Of the fear of children and the curse  
of men?'

'God looked down upon me from  
the heaven above,  
And I did not tremble, happy in  
His love.'

*July 1847.*

## WISHES

OH would that I were very far away  
Among the lanes, with hedges all  
around,

Happily listening to the dreamy  
sound

Of distant sheep-bells, smelling the  
new hay

And all the wild flowers scattered  
in my way:

Or would that I were lying on  
some mound

Where shade and butterflies and  
thyme abound,

Beneath the trees, upon a sunny day:  
Or would I strolled beside the mighty  
sea —

The sea before, and the tall cliffs  
behind;

While winds from the warm south  
might tell to me

How health and joy for all men  
are designed:—

But, be I where I may, would I had  
thee,

And heard thy gentle voice, my  
Mother kind.

*22 July 1847.*

## THE DREAM

REST, rest; the troubled breast  
Panteth evermore for rest:—

Be it sleep or be it death,  
Rest is all it coveteth.

Tell me, dost thou remember the  
old time

We sat together by that sunny  
stream,

And dreamed our happiness was  
too sublime

Only to be a dream?

Gazing, till steadfast gazing made us  
blind;

We watched the fishes leaping  
at their play ;  
Thinking our love too tender and  
too kind  
Ever to pass away.

And some of all our thoughts were  
true at least

What time we thought together  
by that stream ;

*Thy* happiness has evermore in-  
creased,—

*My* love was not a dream.

And, now that thou art gone, I often  
sit

On its green margin, for thou  
once wert there ;

And see the clouds that, floating  
over it,

Darken the quiet air.

Yes oftentimes I sit beside it now,  
Harkening the wavelets ripple  
o'er the sands ;

Until again I hear thy whispered vow  
And feel thy pressing hands.

Then the bright sun seems to stand  
still in heaven,

The stream sings gladly as it  
onward flows,

The rushes grow more green, the  
grass more even,

Blossoms the budding rose.

I say: 'It is a joy-dream ; I will  
take it ;

He is not gone—he will return  
to me.'

What found'st thou in my heart that  
thou shouldst break it?—

How have I injured thee ?

Oh I am weary of life's passing show,  
Its pageant and its pain.

I would I could lie down lone in my  
woe,

Ne'er to rise up again ;  
I would I could lie down where none

might know ;

For truly love is vain.

Truly love's vain ; but oh how vainer  
still

Is that which is not love, but  
seems !

Concealed indifference, a covered ill,  
A very dream of dreams.

1847.

### ELEANOR

CHERRY-RED her mouth was,  
Morning-blue her eye,

Lady-slim her little waist

Rounded prettily ;

And her sweet smile of gladness  
Made every heart rejoice :

But sweeter even than her smile

The tones were of her voice.

Sometimes she spoke, sometimes she  
sang ;

And evermore the sound

Floated, a dreamy melody,

Upon the air around ;

As though a wind were singing

Far up beside the sun,

Till sound and warmth and glory

Were blended all in one.

Her hair was long and golden,  
And clustered unconfined

Over a forehead high and white

That spoke a noble mind.

Her little hand, her little foot,

Were ready evermore

To hurry forth to meet a friend ;

She smiling at the door.

But if she sang or if she spoke,  
 'Twas music soft and grand,  
 As though a distant singing sea  
 Broke on a tuneful strand ;  
 As though a blessed Angel  
 Were singing a glad song,  
 Halfway between the earth and heaven  
 Joyfully borne along.

30 July 1847.

### ISIDORA

LOVE, whom I have loved too well,  
 Turn thy face away from me ;  
 For I heed nor heaven nor hell  
 While mine eyes can look on thee.  
 Do not answer, do not speak,  
 For thy voice can make me weak.

I must choose 'twixt God and man,  
 And I dare not hesitate :  
 Oh how little is life's span,  
 And Eternity how great !  
 Go out from me ; for I fear  
 Mine own strength while thou art  
 here.

Husband, leave me ; but know this :  
 I would gladly give my soul  
 So that thine might dwell in bliss  
 Free from the accurst control,  
 So that thou mightest go hence  
 In a hopeful penitence.

Yea from hell I would look up,  
 And behold thee in thy place,  
 Drinking of the living cup,  
 With the joy-look on thy face,  
 And the light that shines alone  
 From the glory of the Throne.

But how could my endless loss  
 Be thine everlasting gain ?  
 Shall thy palm grow from my cross ?  
 Shall thine ease be in my pain ?

Yea thine own soul witnesseth  
 Thy life is not in my death.

It were vain that I should die—  
 That we thus should perish both ;  
 Thou wouldst gain no peace thereby ;  
 And in truth I should be loth  
 By the loss of my salvation  
 To increase thy condemnation.

Little infant, his and mine,  
 Would that I were as thou art ;  
 Nothing breaks that sleep of thine,  
 And ah nothing breaks thy heart ;  
 And thou knowest naught of strife,  
 The heart's death for the soul's life.

None misdoubt thee, none misdeem  
 Of thy wishes and thy will.  
 All thy thoughts are what they seem,  
 Very pure and very still ;  
 And thou fearest not the voice  
 That once made thy heart rejoice.

Oh how calm thou art, my child !  
 I could almost envy thee.  
 Thou has neither wept nor smiled,  
 Thou that sleepest quietly.  
 Would I also were at rest  
 With the one that I love best.

Husband, go. I dare not hearken  
 To thy words or look upon  
 Those despairing eyes that darken  
 Down on me—But he is gone !  
 Nay, come back, and be my fate  
 As thou wilt !—It is too late.

I have conquered ; it is done,  
 Yea the death-struggle is o'er,  
 And the hopeless quiet won :—  
 I shall see his face no more :—  
 And mine eyes are waxing dim  
 Now they cannot look on him.



And my heart-pulses are growing  
 Very weak, and through my whole  
 Life-blood a slow chill is going :—  
 Blessed Saviour, take my soul  
 To Thy Paradise and care :—  
 Paradise, will he be there ?

9 August 1847.

## ZARA

Now the pain beginneth and the  
 word is spoken ;—  
 Hark unto the tolling of the church-  
 yard chime !—  
 Once my heart was gladsome, now  
 my heart is broken,—  
 Once my love was noble, now it  
 is a crime.

But the fear is over ; yea what now  
 shall pain me ?  
 Arm thee in thy sorrow, O most  
 desolate !  
 Weariness and weakness, these shall  
 now sustain me,—  
 Pride and bitter grieving, burning  
 love and hate.

Yea the fear is over, the strong fear  
 and trembling ;  
 I can doubt no longer, he is gone  
 indeed.  
 Rend thy hair, lost woman, weep  
 without dissembling ;  
 The heart torn forth from it, shall  
 the breast not bleed ?

Happy she who looketh on his  
 beauty's glory !  
 Happy she who listeneth to his  
 gentle word !  
 Yet, O happy maiden, sorrow lies  
 before thee ;  
 Greeting hath been given, parting  
 must be heard.

He shall leave thee also, he who now  
 hath left me,  
 With a weary spirit and an aching  
 heart ;  
 Thou shalt be bereaved by him who  
 hath bereft me ;  
 Thou hast sucked the honey,—  
 feel the stinging's smart.

Let the cold gaze on him, let the  
 heartless hear him,  
 For he shall not hurt them, they  
 are safe in sooth :  
 But let loving women shun that man  
 and fear him,  
 Full of cruel kindness and devoid  
 of ruth.

When ye call upon him, hope for no  
 replying ;  
 When ye gaze upon him, think  
 not he will look ;  
 Hope not for his pity when your  
 heart is sighing ;  
 Such another, waiting, weeping,  
 he forsook.

Hath the heaven no thunder where-  
 with to denounce him ?  
 Hath the heaven no lightning  
 wherewith to chastise ?  
 O my heart and spirit, O my soul,  
 renounce him  
 Who hath called for vengeance  
 from the distant skies :

Vengeance which pursues thee,  
 vengeance which shall find thee,  
 Crushing thy false spirit, scathing  
 thy fair limb :—  
 O ye thunders, deafen, O ye light-  
 nings, blind me ;  
 Winds and storms from heaven,  
 strike me but spare him !

I forgive thee, dearest, cruel, I forgive thee ;—

May thy cup of sorrow be poured out for me ;

Though the dregs be bitter, yet they shall not grieve me,

Knowing that I drink them, O my love, for thee.

1847.

### THE NOVICE

I LOVE one and he loveth me :

Who sayeth this ? who deemeth this ?

And is this thought a cause of bliss,

Or source of misery ?

The loved may die, or he may change :

And if he die thou art bereft ;

Or if he alter nought is left

Save life that seemeth strange.

A weary life, a hopeless life,

Full of all ill and fear-oppressed ;

A weary life that looks for rest

Alone after death's strife.

And love's joy hath no quiet even ;

It evermore is variable.

Its gladness is like war in hell

More than repose in heaven.

Yea it is as a poison-cup

That holds one quick fire-draught within ;

For when the life seems to begin

The slow death looketh up.

Then bring me to a solitude

Where love may neither come nor go ;

Where very peaceful waters flow,

And roots are found for food ;

Where the wild honey-bee booms by,  
And trees and bushes freely give

Ripe fruit and nuts : there I would live,

And there I fain would die.

There autumn leaves may make my grave,

And little birds sing over it ;

And there cool twilight winds may flit

And shadowy branches wave.

4 September 1847

### IMMALEE

I GATHER thyme upon the sunny hills,

And its pure fragrance ever gladdens me,

And in my mind having tranquillity

I smile to see how my green basket fills.

And by clear streams I gather daffodils ;

And in dim woods find out the cherry-tree,

And take its fruit and the wild strawberry

And nuts and honey ; and live free from ills.

I dwell on the green earth, 'neath the blue sky,

Birds are my friends, and leaves my rustling roof :

The deer are not afraid of me, and I Hear the wild goat, and hail its

hastening hoof ;

The squirrels sit perked as I pass them by,

And even the watchful hare stands not aloof.

21 September 1847.

## HEART'S CHILL BETWEEN

I DID not chide him, though I knew  
That he was false to me. ☹  
Chide the exhaling of the dew,  
The ebbing of the sea,  
The fading of a rosy hue—  
But not inconstancy.

Why strive for love when love is  
o'er—

Why bind a restive heart ?  
He never knew the pain I bore  
In saying—'We must part,  
Let us be friends and nothing more':  
Oh woman's shallow art !

But it is over, it is done :  
I hardly heed it now :  
So many weary years have run  
Since then I think not how  
Things might have been—but greet  
each one  
With an unruffled brow.

What time I am where others be  
My heart seems very calm—  
Stone-calm : but, if all go from me,  
There comes a vague alarm,  
A shrinking in the memory  
From some forgotten harm.

And often through the long long  
night,  
Waking when none are near,  
I feel my heart beat fast with fright,  
Yet know not what I fear :  
Oh how I long to see the light,  
And the sweet birds to hear !

To have the sun upon my face,  
To look up through the trees,  
To walk forth in the open space  
And listen to the breeze,—

And not to dream the burial-place  
Is clogging my weak knees.

Sometimes I can nor weep nor pray,  
But am half stupefied ;  
And then all those who see me say  
Mine eyes are opened wide  
And that my wits seem gone  
astray :—  
Ah would that I had died !

Would I could die and be at peace—  
Or living could forget !  
My grief nor grows nor doth decrease,  
But ever is. And yet  
Methinks now that all this shall cease  
Before the sun shall set.

22 September 1847.

## LADY ISABELLA

Heart warm as summer, fresh as  
spring,  
Gracious as autumn's harvesting,  
Pure as the winter's snows ; as white  
A hand as lilies in sunlight ;  
Eyes glorious as a midnight star ;  
Hair shining as the chestnuts are ;  
A step firm and majestic ;  
A voice singing and musical ;  
A soft expression, kind address ;  
Tears for another's heaviness ;  
Bright looks ; an action full of grace ;  
A perfect form, a perfect face ;  
All these become a woman well,  
And these had Lady Isabel.

27 September 1847.

## NIGHT AND DEATH

Now the sunlit hours are o'er,  
Rise up from thy shadowy shore,  
Happy Night, whom Chaos bore.

Better is the peaceful treasure  
Of thy musings without measure  
Than the day's unquiet pleasure.

Bring the holy moon ; so pale  
She herself seems but a veil  
For the sun, where no clouds sail.

Bring the stars, thy progeny ;  
Each a little lamp on high  
To light up an azure sky.

Sounds incomprehensible  
In the shining planets dwell  
Of thy sister Queen to tell.

Of that sister Nature saith  
She hath power o'er life and breath ;  
And her name is written Death.

She is fairer far than thou ;  
Grief her head can never bow,  
Joy is stamped upon her brow.

She is full of gentleness,  
And of faith and hope ; distress  
Finds in her forgetfulness.

In her arms who lieth down  
Never more is seen to frown,  
Though he wore a thorny crown.

Whoso sigheth in unrest,  
If his head lean on her breast,  
Witnesseth she is the best.

All the riches of the earth,  
Weighed by her, are nothing worth :  
She is the eternal birth.

In her treasure-house are found  
Stored abundantly around  
Almsdeeds done without a sound ;

Long forbearance ; patient will ;  
Fortitude in midst of ill ;  
Hope, when even fear grew still ;

Kindness given again for hate ;  
Hearts resigned though desolate ;  
Meekness, which is truly great ;

Bitter tears of penitence ;  
Changeless love's omnipotence :—  
And nought lacketh recompense.

In her house no tainted thing,  
Winneth any entering ;  
There the poor have comforting.

There they wait a little time  
Till the Angel-uttered chime  
Sound the eternal matin-prime.

Then, upraised in joyfulness,  
They shall know her, and confess  
She is blessed and doth bless.

When earth's fleeting day is flown,  
All created things shall own.  
Death is Life, and Death alone.

28 September 1847.

## DEATH'S CHILL BETWEEN

CHIDE not : let me breathe a little,  
For I shall not mourn him long ;  
Though the life-cord was so brittle,  
The love-cord was very strong.  
I would wake a little space  
Till I find a sleeping-place.

You can go,—I shall not weep ;  
You can go unto your rest.  
My heart-ache is all too deep,  
And too sore my throbbing breast.  
Can sobs be, or angry tears,  
Where are neither hopes nor fears ?

Though with you I am alone  
 And must be so everywhere,  
 I will make no useless moan,—  
 None shall say, 'She could not  
 bear.'

While life lasts I will be strong,—  
 But I shall not struggle long.

Listen, listen!—Everywhere  
 A low voice is calling me,  
 And a step is on the stair,  
 And one comes you do not see.  
 Listen, listen!—Evermore  
 A dim hand knocks at the door.

Hear me! He is come again,  
 My own dearest is come back.  
 Bring him in from the cold rain;  
 Bring wine, and let nothing lack.  
 Thou and I will rest together,  
 Love, until the sunny weather.

I will shelter thee from harm,  
 Hide thee from all heaviness.  
 Come to me, and keep thee warm  
 By my side in quietness.  
 I will lull thee to thy sleep  
 With sweet songs: we will not weep.

Who hath talked of weeping?—Yet  
 There is something at my heart  
 Gnawing, I would fain forget,  
 And an aching and a smart.—  
 Ah, my mother, 'tis in vain,  
 For he is not come again.

29 September 1847.

## THE LOTUS-EATERS

### ULYSSES TO PENELOPE

In a far distant land they dwell,  
 Incomprehensible,

Who love the shadow more than  
 light,  
 More than the sun the moon,  
 Cool evening more than noon,  
 Pale silver more than gold that  
 glitters bright.

A dark cloud overhangs their  
 land

Like a mighty hand,  
 Never moving from above it;  
 A cool shade and moist and  
 dim,

With a twilight purple rim,  
 And they love it.

And sometimes it giveth rain,  
 But soon it ceaseth as before,  
 And earth drieth up again,—  
 Then the dewes rise more and  
 more,

Till it filleth, dropping o'er;  
 But no forked lightnings flit,  
 And no thunders roll in it.  
 Through the land a river flows,  
 With a sleepy sound it goes:

Such a drowsy noise, in sooth,  
 Those who will not listen  
 hear not:

But, if one is wakeful, fear  
 not—

It shall lull him to repose,  
 Bringing back the dreams of  
 youth.

Hemlock groweth, poppy bloweth,  
 In the fields where no man  
 moweth:

And the vine is full of wine  
 And are full of milk the kine,  
 And the hares are all secure,  
 And the birds are wild no more,  
 And the forest-trees wax old,  
 And winds stir, or hot or cold,—  
 And yet no man taketh care,  
 All things resting everywhere.

7 October 1847.

## SONNET

## FROM THE PSALMS

ALL through the livelong night I lay  
 awake,  
 Watering my couch with tears of  
 heaviness.  
 None stood beside me in my sore  
 distress :—  
 Then cried I to my heart : If thou  
 wilt, break,  
 But be thou still ; no moaning will  
 I make,  
 Nor ask man's help, nor kneel  
 that he may bless.  
 So I kept silence in my haughti-  
 ness,  
 Till lo the fire was kindled, and I  
 spake—  
 Saying : Oh that I had wings like  
 to a dove,  
 Then would I flee away and be at  
 rest :  
 I would not pray for friends or hope  
 or love,  
 But still the weary throbbing of  
 my breast :  
 And, gazing on the changeless  
 heavens above,  
 Witness that such a quietness is  
 best.

7 November 1847.

## SONG

THE stream moaneth as it floweth,  
 The wind sigheth as it bloweth,  
 Leaves are falling, Autumn goeth,  
 Winter cometh back again ;  
 And the air is very chilly,  
 And the country rough and hilly,  
 And I shiver in the rain.  
 Who will help me ? who will love me ?

Heaven sets forth no light above me :  
 Ancient memories reprove me,  
 Long-forgotten feelings move me,  
 I am full of heaviness.  
 Earth is cold, too cold the sea :  
 Whither shall I turn and flee ?  
 Is there any hope for me ?  
 Any ease for my heart-aching,  
 Any sleep that hath no waking,  
 Any night without day-breaking,  
 Any rest from weariness ?

Hark the wind is answering :  
 Hark the running stream replieth :  
 There is rest for him that dieth :  
 In the grave whoever lieth  
 Nevermore hath sorrowing.  
 Holy slumber, holy quiet,  
 Close the eyes and still the riot :  
 And the brain forgets its thought,  
 And the heart forgets its beating.  
 Earth and earthly things are  
 fleeting ;  
 There is what all men have sought—  
 Long unchangeable repose,  
 Lulling us from many woes.

7 November 1847.

## THE WORLD'S HARMONIES

OH listen, listen, for the Earth  
 Hath silent melody :  
 Green grasses are her lively chords,  
 And blossoms : and each tree,  
 Chestnut and oak and sycamore,  
 Makes solemn harmony.

Oh listen, listen, for the Sea  
 Is calling unto us :  
 Her notes are the broad liquid  
 waves  
 Mighty and glorious.  
 Lo the first man and the last man  
 Hath heard, shall hearken thus.



The Sun on which men cannot look,  
 Its splendour is so strong,  
 Which wakeneth life and giveth life,  
 Rolling in light along,  
 From day-dawn to dim eventide  
 Sings the eternal song.

And the Moon taketh up the hymn,  
 And the Stars answer all :  
 And all the Clouds and all the  
 Winds  
 And all the Dews that fall  
 And Frost and fertilizing Rain  
 Are mutely musical.

Fishes and Beasts and feathered  
 Fowl  
 Swell the eternal chaunt,  
 That riseth through the lower air,  
 Over the rainbow slant,  
 Up through the unseen palace-gates,  
 Fearlessly jubilant.

Before the everlasting Throne  
 It is acceptable :  
 It hath no pause or faltering :  
 The Angels know it well :  
 Yea in the highest heaven of heavens  
 Its sound is audible.

Yet than the voice of the whole World  
 There is a sweeter voice,  
 That maketh all the Cherubim  
 And Seraphim rejoice :  
 That all the blessed Spirits hail  
 With undivided choice :

That crieth at the golden door  
 And gaineth entrance in :

That the palm-branch and radiant  
 crown  
 And glorious throne may win :—  
 The lowly prayer of a Poor Man  
 Who turneth from his sin.  
*20 November 1847.*

## THE LAST ANSWER

(Written to Bouts-rimés.)

SHE turned round to me with her  
 steadfast eyes.

'I tell you I have looked upon  
 the dead ;

Have kissed the brow and the  
 cold lips,' she said ;

'Have called upon the sleeper to  
 arise.

He loved me, yet he stirred not : on  
 this wise,

Not bowing in weak agony my  
 head,

But all too sure of what life is, to  
 dread,

Learned I that love and hope are  
 fallacies.'

She gazed quite calmly on me : and  
 I felt

Awed and astonished and almost  
 afraid :

For what was I to have ad-  
 monished her ?

Then, being full of doubt and fear,  
 I knelt,

And tears came to my eyes even  
 as I prayed :

But she meanwhile only grew  
 statelier.

*2 December 1847.*

## DEVOTIONAL POEMS

I DO SET MY BOW IN THE  
CLOUD

THE roses bloom too late for me :  
 The violets I shall not see :  
 Even the snowdrops will not come  
 Till I have passed from home to home :  
 From home on earth to home in  
     heaven,  
 Here penitent and there forgiven.

Mourn not, my Father, that I seek  
 One who is strong when I am weak.  
 Through the dark passage, verily,  
 His rod and staff shall comfort me :  
 He shall support me in the strife  
 Of death that dieth into life :  
 He shall support me, He receive  
 My soul when I begin to live,  
 And more than I can ask for give.

He from the heaven-gates built above  
 Hath looked on me in perfect love.  
 From the heaven-walls to me He  
     calls  
 To come and dwell within those  
     walls :

With Cherubim and Seraphim  
 And Angels : yea, beholding Him.

His care for me is more than mine,  
 Father ; His love is more than thine.  
 Sickness and death I have from thee,  
 From Him have immortality. ♣  
 He giveth gladness where He will,  
 Yet chasteneth His beloved still.

Then tell me : is it not enough  
 To feel that, when the path is rough  
 And the sky dark and the rain cold,  
 His promise standeth as of old ?

When heaven and earth have past  
     away

Only His righteous word shall stay,  
 And we shall know His will is best.  
 Behold : He is a haven-rest,  
 A sheltering-rock, a hiding-place,  
 For runners steadfast in the race ;  
 Who, toiling for a little space,  
 Had light through faith when sight  
     grew dim,  
 And offered all their world to Him.

*December 1847.*

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP  
IN VICTORY

‘TELL me : doth it not grieve thee  
     to lie here,  
 And see the cornfields waving not  
     for thee,

Just in the waking summer of the  
     year ?’

‘I fade from earth, and lo along  
     with me

The season that I love will fade  
     away :

How should I look for autumn  
     longingly ?’

‘Yet autumn beareth fruit whilst day  
     by day

The leaves grow browner with a  
     mellow hue,

Declining to a beautiful decay.’

‘Decay is death, with which I  
     have to do,

And see it near : behold, it is more  
     good

Than length of days and length  
     of sorrow too.’

'But thy heart hath not dwelt in solitude ;

Many have loved and love thee :  
dost not heed

Free love, for which in vain have  
others sued ?'

'I thirst for love, love is mine  
only need,

Love such as none hath borne me  
nor can bear,

True love that prompteth thought  
and word and deed.'

'Here it is not : why seek it other-  
where ?

Nay, bow thy head, and own that  
on this earth

Are many goodly things and sweet  
and fair.'

'There are tears in man's laughter :  
in his mirth

There is a fearful forward look ; and lo  
An infant's cry gives token of its  
birth.'

'I mark the ocean of Time ebb and  
flow :

He who hath care one day and is  
perplexed

To-morrow may have joy in place of  
woe.'

'Evil becomes good : and to this  
annext

Good becomes evil : speak of it no  
more :

My heart is wearied and my spirit  
vext.'

'Is there no place it grieves thee to  
give o'er ?

Is there no home thou lov'st, and  
so wouldst fain

Tarry a little longer at the door ?'

'I must go hence and not return  
again :

But the friends whom I have shall  
come to me,

And dwell together with me safe  
from pain.'

'Where is that mansion mortals  
cannot see ?

Behold, the tombs are full of  
worms : shalt thou

Rise thence and soar up skywards  
gloriously ?'

'Even as the planets shine we  
know not how,

We shall be raised then, changed  
yet still the same—

Being made like Christ, yea being  
as He is now.'

'Thither thou go'st whence no man  
ever came :

Death's voyagers return not, and  
in death

There is no room for speech or sign  
or fame.'

'There is room for repose that  
comforteth ;

There weariness is not : and there  
content

Broodeth for ever, and hope  
hovereth.'

'When the stars fall and when the  
graves are rent,

Shalt thou have safety ? shalt thou  
look for life

When the great light of the broad  
sun is spent ?'

'These elements shall consum-  
mate their strife,

This heaven and earth shall shrivel  
like a scroll,

And then be re-created, beauty-  
rife.'

'Who shall abide it when from pole  
to pole

The world's foundations shall be  
overthrown ?

Who shall abide to scan the perfect  
whole ?'

'He who hath strength given to  
 him, not his own :  
 He who hath faith in that which is  
 not seen,  
 And patient hope : who trusts in  
 Love alone.'  
 'Yet thou—the death-struggle must  
 intervene  
 Ere thou win rest : think better  
 of it : think  
 Of all that is and shall be and hath  
 been.'  
 'The cup my Father giveth me to  
 drink,  
 Shall I not take it meekly ? though  
 my heart  
 Tremble a moment, it shall never  
 shrink.'  
 'Satan will wrestle with thee when  
 thou art  
 In the last agony ; and Death  
 will bring  
 Sins to remembrance ere thy spirit  
 part.'  
 'In that great hour of unknown  
 suffering  
 God shall be with me, and His arm  
 made bare  
 Shall fight for me : yea, under-  
 neath His wing  
 I shall lie safe at rest and freed  
 from care.'  
 20 February 1848.

## SYMBOLS

I WATCHED a rosebud very long  
 Brought on by dew and sun and  
 shower,  
 Waiting to see the perfect flower :  
 Then, when I thought it should be  
 strong,  
 It opened at the matin hour  
 And fell at evensong.

I watched a nest from day to day,  
 A green nest full of pleasant shade,  
 Wherein three speckled eggs were  
 laid :  
 But when they should have hatched  
 in May,  
 The two old birds had grown  
 afraid  
 Or tired, and flew away.

Then in my wrath I broke the bough  
 That I had tended so with care,  
 Hoping its scent should fill the air ;  
 I crushed the eggs, not heeding how  
 Their ancient promise had been  
 fair :  
 I would have vengeance now.

But the dead branch spoke from the  
 sod,  
 And the eggs answered me again :  
 Because we failed dost thou com-  
 plain ?  
 Is thy wrath just ? And what if God,  
 Who waiteth for thy fruits in vain,  
 Should also take the rod ?

7 January 1849.

## SWEET DEATH

THE sweetest blossoms die.  
 And so it was that, going day by  
 day  
 Unto the Church to praise and  
 pray,  
 And crossing the green churchyard  
 thoughtfully,  
 I saw how on the graves the  
 flowers  
 Shed their fresh leaves in showers,  
 And how their perfume rose up to  
 the sky  
 Before it passed away.

The youngest blossoms die.  
 They die and fall and nourish the  
 rich earth  
 From which they lately had their  
 birth ;  
 Sweet life, but sweeter death that  
 passeth by  
 And is as though it had not  
 been :—  
 All colours turn to green ;  
 The bright hues vanish, and the  
 odours fly,  
 The grass hath lasting worth.

And youth and beauty die.  
 So be it, O my God, Thou God  
 of Truth :  
 Better than beauty and than youth  
 Are Saints and Angels, a glad  
 company ;  
 And Thou, O Lord, our Rest and  
 Ease,  
 Art better far than these.  
 Why should we shrink from our full  
 harvest? why  
 Prefer to glean with Ruth?  
*9 February 1849.*

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

THANK God, thank God, we do  
 believe :  
 Thank God that this is Christmas Eve.  
 Even as we kneel upon this day,  
 Even so, the ancient legends say,  
 Nearly two thousand years ago  
 The stalled ox knelt, and even so  
 The ass knelt full of praise, which  
 they  
 Could not express, while we can pray.  
 Thank God, thank God, for Christ  
 was born  
 Ages ago, as on this morn.

In the snow-season undefiled  
 God came to earth a little child :  
 He put His ancient glory by  
 To live for us and then to die.

How shall we thank God? How  
 shall we

Thank Him and praise Him worthily?  
 What will He have who loved us thus?  
 What presents will He take from us?  
 Will He take gold, or precious heap  
 Of gems? or shall we rather steep  
 The air with incense, or bring myrrh?  
 What man will be our messenger  
 To go to Him and ask His will?  
 Which having learned, we will fulfil  
 Though He choose all we most  
 prefer :—

What man will be our messenger?

Thank God, thank God, the Man is  
 found,  
 Sure-footed, knowing well the ground.  
 He knows the road, for this the way  
 He travelled once, as on this day.  
 He is our Messenger beside,  
 He is our door and path and Guide :  
 He also is our Offering :  
 He is the gift that we must bring.  
 Let us kneel down with one accord  
 And render thanks unto the Lord :  
 For unto us a Child is born  
 Upon this happy Christmas morn ;  
 For unto us a Son is given,  
 Firstborn of God and Heir of  
 Heaven.

*7 March 1849.*

### FOR ADVENT

SWEET sweet sound of distant waters,  
 falling  
 On a parched and thirsty plain :

Sweet sweet song of soaring skylark,  
calling

On the sun to shine again :  
Perfume of the rose, only the fresher  
For past fertilizing rain :  
Pearls amid the sea, a hidden treasure  
For some daring hand to gain :—  
Better, dearer than all these  
Is the earth beneath the trees :  
Of a much more priceless worth  
Is the old brown common earth.

Little snow-white lamb, piteously  
bleating

For thy mother far away :  
Saddest sweetest nightingale, re-  
treating  
With thy sorrow from the day :  
Weary fawn whom night has over-  
taken,

From the herd gone quite astray :  
Dove whose nest was rifled and for-  
saken

In the budding month of May :—  
Roost upon the leafy trees,  
Lie on earth and take your  
ease :

Death is better far than birth :  
You shall turn again to earth.

Listen to the never-pausing murmur  
Of the waves that fret the shore :  
See the ancient pine that stands the  
firmer

For the storm-shock that it bore :  
And the moon her silver chalice  
filling

With light from the great sun's  
store :

And 'the stars which deck our  
temple's ceiling

As the flowers deck its floor :  
Look and hearken while you may,  
For these things shall pass away :

All these things shall fail and  
cease :

Let us wait the end in peace.

Let us wait the end in peace, for truly  
That shall cease which was before :  
Let us see our lamps are lighted, duly  
Fed with oil nor wanting more :  
Let us pray while yet the Lord will  
hear us,

For the time is almost o'er :  
Yea, the end of all is very near us :  
Yea, the Judge is at the door.

Let us pray now, while we may :  
It will be too late to pray  
When the quick and dead shall all  
Rise at the last trumpet-call.

12 March 1849.

## TWO PURSUITS

A VOICE said, 'Follow, follow' : and  
I rose

And followed far into the dreamy  
night,

Turning my back upon the  
pleasant light.

It led me where the bluest water  
flows,

And would not let me drink : where  
the corn grows

I dared not pause, but went un-  
cheered by sight

Or touch : until at length in evil  
plight

It left me, wearied out with many  
woes.

Some time I sat as one bereft of  
sense :

But soon another voice from very  
far

Called, 'Follow, follow' : and  
I rose again.



Now on my night has dawned a  
blessed star :  
Kind steady hands my sinking  
steps sustain,  
And will not leave me till I shall go  
hence.

12 April 1849.

### ONE CERTAINTY

VANITY of vanities, the Preacher  
saith,

All things are vanity. The eye  
and ear

Cannot be filled with what they  
see and hear.

Like early dew, or like the sudden  
breath

Of wind, or like the grass that  
withereth,

Is man, tossed to and fro by hope  
and fear :

So little joy hath he, so little  
cheer,

Till all things end in the long dust  
of death.

To-day is still the same as yesterday,  
To-morrow also even as one of  
them ;

And there is nothing new under  
the sun :

Until the ancient race of Time  
be run,

The old thorns shall grow out of  
the old stem,

And morning shall be cold and  
twilight grey.

2 June 1849.

### A TESTIMONY

I SAID of laughter : it is vain.  
Of mirth I said : what profits it ?

Therefore I found a book, and writ  
Therein how ease and also pain,  
How health and sickness, every one  
Is vanity beneath the sun.

Man walks in a vain shadow ; he  
Disquieteth himself in vain.

The things that were shall be  
again ;

The rivers do not fill the sea,  
But turn back to their secret source ;  
The winds too turn upon their course.

Our treasures moth and rust corrupt,  
Orthieves break through and steal,  
or they

Make themselves wings and fly  
away.

One man made merry as he supped,  
Nor guessed how when that night  
grew dim

His soul would be required of him.

We build our houses on the sand

Comely withoutside and within ;

But when the winds and rains begin

To beat on them, they cannot stand :

They perish, quickly overthrown,  
Loose from the very basement stone.

All things are vanity, I said :

Yea vanity of vanities.

The rich man dies ; and the poor  
dies :

The worm feeds sweetly on the dead.

Whate'er thou lackest, keep this  
trust :

All in the end shall have but dust :

The one inheritance, which best

And worst alike shall find and  
share :

The wicked cease from troubling  
there,

And there the weary be at rest ;  
There all the wisdom of the wise  
Is vanity of vanities.

Man flourishes as a green leaf,  
And as a leaf doth pass away ;  
Or as a shade that cannot stay  
And leaves no track, his course is  
brief :  
Yet man doth hope and fear and plan  
Till he is dead :—oh foolish man !

Our eyes cannot be satisfied  
With seeing, nor our ears be filled  
With hearing : yet we plant and  
build  
And buy and make our borders wide ;  
We gather wealth, we gather care,  
But know not who shall be our heir.

Why should we hasten to arise  
So early, and so late take rest ?  
Our labour is not good ; our best  
Hopes fade ; our heart is stayed on  
lies.  
Verily, we sow wind ; and we  
Shall reap the whirlwind, verily.

He who hath little shall not lack ;  
He who hath plenty shall decay :  
Our fathers went ; we pass away ;  
Our children follow on our track :  
So generations fail, and so  
They are renewed and come and go.

The earth is fattened with our dead ;  
She swallows more and doth not  
cease :  
Therefore her wine and oil increase  
And her sheaves are not numberèd ;  
Therefore her plants are green, and  
all  
Her pleasant trees lusty and tall.

Therefore the maidens cease to sing,  
And the young men are very sad ;  
Therefore the sowing is not glad,  
And mournful is the harvesting.  
Of high and low, of great and  
small,  
Vanity is the lot of all.

A King dwelt in Jerusalem ;  
He was the wisest man on earth ;  
He had all riches from his birth,  
And pleasures till he tired of them ;  
Then, having tested all things, he  
Witnessed that all are vanity.

31 August 1849.

## SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

(From 2 March 1850 to before 1893.)

' Her Seed ; It shall bruise thy head.'

ASTONISHED Heaven looked on when  
man was made,  
When fallen man reproved seemed  
half forgiven ;  
Surely that oracle of hope, first said,  
Astonished Heaven.

Even so while one by one loſt  
souls are shriven,  
A mighty multitude of quickened  
dead ;  
Christ's love outnumbering ten  
times sevenfold seven.

Even so while man still tosses high  
his head,  
While still the All-Holy Spirit's  
strife is striven ;—  
Till one last trump shake earth, and  
undismayed  
Astonished Heaven.  
Before 1887.

Judge nothing before the time.

LOVE understands the mystery,  
whereof

We can but spell a surface history:  
Love knows, remembers; let us trust  
in Love:

Love understands the mystery.

Love weighs the event, the long  
pre-history,  
Measures the depth beneath, the  
height above,  
The mystery, with the ante-  
mystery.

To love and to be grieved befits a dove  
Silently telling her bead-history:  
Trust all to Love, be patient and  
approve:

Love understands the mystery.

*Before 1886.*

How great is little man!

Sun, moon, and stars respond to  
him,  
Shine or grow dim  
Harmonious with his span.

How little is great man!

More changeable than changeful  
moon,  
Nor half in tune  
With Heaven's harmonious plan.

Ah rich man! ah poor man!

Make ready for the testing day  
When wastes away  
What bears not fire or fan.

Thou heir of all things, man,  
Pursue the saints by heavenward  
track:

They looked not back;  
Run thou, as erst they ran.

Little and great is man:

Great if he will, or if he will  
A pigmy still;  
For what he will he can.

*Before 1893.*

MAN'S life is but a working day

Whose tasks are set aright:  
A time to work, a time to pray,  
And then a quiet night.  
And then, please God, a quiet night  
Where palms are green and robes  
are white;

A long-drawn breath, a balm for  
sorrow,

And all things lovely on the morrow.

*19 March 1864.*

IF not with hope of life,

Begin with fear of death!  
Strive the tremendous life-long strife  
Breath after breath.

Bleed on beneath the rod;

Weep on until thou see;  
Turn fear and hope to love of God  
Who loveth thee.

Turn all to love, poor soul;

Be love thy watch and ward;  
Be love thy starting-point, thy goal,  
And thy reward.

*Before 1893.*

The day is at hand.

WATCH yet a while,

Weep till that day shall dawn when  
thou shalt smile:

Watch till the day

When all save only Love shall pass  
away.

Then Love rejoicing shall forget to weep,  
 Shall hope or fear no more, or watch or sleep,  
 But only love and stint not, deep beyond deep.  
 Now we sow love in tears, but then shall reap.  
 Have patience as True Love's own flock of sheep :  
 Have patience with His Love  
 Who served for us, Who reigns for us above.

*Before 1886.*

Endure hardness.

A COLD wind stirs the blackthorn  
 To burgeon and to blow,  
 Besprinkling half-green hedges  
 With flakes and sprays of snow.

Thro' coldness and thro' keenness,  
 Dear hearts, take comfort so :  
 Somewhere or other doubtless  
 These make the blackthorn blow.

*Before 1886.*

' Whither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes  
 of the Lord.'

LIGHT is our sorrow for it ends to-morrow,  
 Light is our death which cannot hold us fast ;  
 So brief a sorrow can be scarcely sorrow,  
 Or death be death so quickly past.

One night, no more, of pain that turns to pleasure,

One night, no more, of weeping weeping sore ;

And then the heaped-up measure beyond measure,

In quietness for evermore.

Our face is set like flint against our trouble,

Yet many things there are which comfort us ;

This bubble is a rainbow-coloured bubble,

This bubble-life tumultuous.

Our sails are set to cross the tossing river,

Our face is set to reach Jerusalem ;

We toil awhile, but then we rest for ever,

Sing with all Saints and rest with them.

*Circa 1877.*

WHERE never tempest heaveth,  
 Nor sorrow grieveth,  
 Nor death bereaveth,  
 Nor hope deceiveth,  
 Sleep.

Where never shame bewaileth,  
 Nor serpent traileth,  
 Nor death prevaieth,  
 Nor harvest faileth,

Reap.

*Before 1893.*

MARVEL of marvels, if I myself shall behold

With mine own eyes my King in His city of gold ;

Where the least of lambs is spotless white in the fold,

Where the least and last of saints in spotless white is stoled,

Where the dimmest head beyond a moon is aureoled.

O saints, my beloved, now mouldering to mould in the mould,

Shall I see you lift your heads, see your cerements unrolled,

See with these very eyes? who now  
in darkness and cold  
Tremble for the midnight cry, the  
rapture, the tale untold,  
'The Bridegroom cometh, cometh,  
His Bride to enfold.'

Cold it is, my beloved, since your  
funeral bell was tolled :  
Cold it is, O my King, how cold  
alone on the wold.

*Before 1893.*

What is that to thee? follow thou Me.  
LIE still, my restive heart, lie still :  
God's Word to thee saith, 'Wait  
and bear.'  
The good which He appoints is good,  
The good which He denies were ill :  
Yea, subtle comfort is thy care,  
Thy hurt a help not understood.

'Friend, go up higher,' to one : to  
one,  
'Friend, enter thou My joy,' He  
saith :

To one, 'Be faithful unto death.'  
For some a wilderness doth flower,  
Or day's work in one hour is done :—  
'But thou, couldst thou not watch  
one hour?'

Lord, I had chosen another lot,  
But then I had not chosen well ;  
Thy choice and only Thine is good :  
No different lot, search heaven or  
hell,  
Had blessed me, fully understood ;  
None other, which Thou orderest not.

*Before 1886.*

'Worship God.'

LORD, if Thy word had been  
'Worship Me not,

For I than thou am holier : draw  
not near' :

We had besieged Thy Face with  
prayer and tear  
And manifold abasement in our  
lot,

Our crooked ground, our thorned  
and thistled plot ;

Envious of flawless Angels in their  
sphere,

Envious of brutes, and envious of  
the mere

Unliving and undying unbegot.

But now Thou hast said, 'Worship  
Me, and give

Thy heart to Me, My child' ; now  
therefore we

Think twice before we stoop to  
worship Thee :

We proffer half a heart while life  
is strong

And strung with hope ; so sweet it  
is to live !

Wilt Thou not wait? Yea, Thou  
hast waited long.

*Before 1893.*

'Afterward he repented, and went.'

LORD, when my heart was whole I  
kept it back

And grudged to give it Thee.

Now then that it is broken, must I  
lack

Thy kind word 'Give it Me'?

Silence would be but just, and Thou  
art just.

Yet since I lie here shattered in the  
dust,

With still an eye to lift to Thee,

A broken heart to give,

I think that Thou wilt bid me live,

And answer 'Give it Me.'

*Before 1886.*

Are they not all Ministering Spirits?

LORD, whomsoever Thou shalt send  
to me,

Let that same be

Mine Angel predilect :

Veiled or unveiled, benignant or  
austere,

Aloof or near ;

Thine, therefore mine, elect.

So may my soul nurse patience day  
by day,

Watch on and pray

Obedient and at peace ;

Living a lonely life in hope, in faith ;

Loving till death,

When life, not love, shall cease.

. . . Lo, thou mine Angel with  
transfigured face

Brimful of grace,

Brimful of love for me !

Did I misdoubt thee all that weary  
while,

Thee with a smile

For me as I for thee ?

*Before 1893.*

OUR life is long. Not so, wise  
Angels say

Who watch us waste it, trembling  
while they weigh

Against eternity one squandered day.

Our life is long. Not so, the Saints  
protest,

Filled full of consolation and of rest :

'Short ill, long good, one long un-  
ending best.'

Our life is long. Christ's word  
sounds different :

'Night cometh : no more work when  
day is spent.'

Repent and work to-day, work and  
repent.

Lord, make us like Thy Host who  
day nor night

Rest not from adoration, their de-  
light,

Crying 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' in the  
height.

Lord, make us like Thy Saints who  
wait and long

Contented : bound in hope and freed  
from wrong,

They speed (may be) their vigil with  
a song.

Lord, make us like Thyself ; for  
thirty-three

Slow years of toil seemed not too  
long to Thee,

That where Thou art there Thy  
Beloved might be.

*Before 1886.*

LORD, what have I to offer ? sicken-  
ing fear

And a heart-breaking loss.

Are these the cross Thou givest me?  
then dear

I will account this cross.

If this is all I have, accept even this  
Poor priceless offering,

A quaking heart with all that therein  
is,

O Thou my thorn-crowned King.

Accept the whole, my God, accept  
my heart

And its own love within :



Wilt Thou accept us and not sift  
apart?

—Only sift out my sin.

*Before 1886.*

Joy is but sorrow,

While we know

It ends to-morrow:—

Even so!

Joy with lifted veil

Shows a face as pale

As the fair changing moon so fair  
and frail.

Pain is but pleasure,

If we know

It heaps up treasure:—

Even so!

Turn, transfigured Pain,

Sweetheart, turn again,

For fair thou art as moonrise after  
rain.

*Before 1886.*

‘CAN I know it?’—‘Nay.’—

‘Shall I know it?’—‘Yea,

When all mists have cleared away

For ever and aye.’—

‘Why not then to-day? —

‘Who hath said thee nay?

Lift a hopeful heart and pray

In a humble way.’—

‘Other hearts are gay.’—

‘Ask not joy to-day:

Toil to-day along thy way

Keeping grudge at bay.’—

‘On a past May-day

Flowers pranked all the way;

Nightingales sang out their say

On a night of May.’—

‘Dost thou covet May

On an Autumn day?

Foolish memory saith its say

Of sweets past away.’—

‘Gone the bloom of May,

Autumn beareth bay:

Flowerless wreath for head grown

grey

Seemly were to-day.’—

‘Dost thou covet bay?

Ask it not to-day:

Rather for a palm-branch pray;

None will say thee nay.’

*Before 1893.*

When my heart is vexed I will complain.

‘THE fields are white to harvest,

look and see,

Are white abundantly.

The full-orbed harvest moon shines

clear,

The harvest time draws near,

Be of good cheer.’

‘Ah woe is me!

I have no heart for harvest time,

Grown sick with hope deferred from

chime to chime.’

‘But Christ can give thee heart Who

loveth thee:

Can set thee in the eternal ecstasy

Of His great jubilee:

Can give thee dancing heart and

shining face,

And lips filled full of grace,

And pleasures as the rivers and the

sea.

Who knocketh at His door

He welcomes evermore:

Kneel down before

That ever-open door  
(The time is short) and smite  
Thy breast, and pray with all thy  
might.'

'What shall I say?'

'Nay, pray.

Thou' one but say "Thy Will be done,"  
He hath not lost his day  
At set of sun.'

*Before 1886.*

'Praying always.'

AFTER midnight, in the dark  
The clock strikes one,  
New day has begun.  
Look up and hark!  
With singing heart forestall the  
carolling lark.

After mid-day, in the light  
The clock strikes one,  
Day-fall has begun.  
Cast up, set right  
The day's account against the on-  
coming night.

After noon and night, one day  
For ever one  
Ends not, once begun.  
Whither away,  
O brothers and O sisters? Pause  
and pray.

*Before 1886.*

'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.'

DAY that hath no tinge of night,  
Night that hath no tinge of day,  
These at last will come to sight  
Not to fade away.

This is twilight that we know,  
Scarcely night and scarcely day;

This hath been from long ago  
Shed around man's way:

Step by step to utter night,  
Step by step to perfect day,  
To the Left Hand or the Right  
Leading all away.

This is twilight: be it so;  
Suited to our strength our day:  
Let us follow on to know,  
Patient by the way.

*Before 1893.*

A HEAVY heart, if ever heart was  
heavy,  
I offer Thee this heavy heart of  
me.

Are such as this the hearts Thou art  
fain to levy  
To do and dare for Thee, to  
bleed for Thee?  
Ah blessed heaviness if such they  
be!

Time was I bloomed with blossom  
and stood leafy,  
How long before the fruit if fruit  
there be:  
Lord, if by bearing fruit my heart  
grows heavy,  
Leafless and bloomless yet accept  
of me  
The stripped fruit-bearing heart I  
offer Thee.

Lifted to Thee my heart weighs not  
so heavy,  
It leaps and lightens lifted up to  
Thee;  
It sings, it hopes to sing amid the  
bevy

Of thousand thousand choirs that  
sing, and see  
Thy Face, me loving, for Thou  
lovest me.

*Before 1886.*

If love is not worth loving, then  
life is not worth living,  
Nor aught is worth remembering  
but well forgot ;  
For store is not worth storing and  
gifts are not worth giving,  
If love is not ;

And idly cold is death-cold, and  
life-heat idly hot,  
And vain is any offering and vainer  
our receiving,  
And vanity of vanities is all our  
lot.

Better than life's heaving heart is  
death's heart unheaving,  
Better than the opening leaves  
are the leaves that rot,  
For there is nothing left worth  
achieving or retrieving,  
If love is not.

*Before 1886.*

WHAT is it Jesus saith unto the  
soul ?

'Take up the Cross, and come  
and follow Me.'

One word He saith to all men :  
none may be

Without a cross yet hope to touch  
the goal.

Then heave it bravely up, and brace  
thy whole

Body to bear ; it will not weigh  
on thee

Past strength ; or if it crush thee  
to thy knee

Take heart of grace, for grace shall  
be thy dole.

Give thanks to-day, and let to-morrow  
take

Heed to itself ; to-day imports  
thee more.

To-morrow may not dawn like  
yesterday :

Until that unknown morrow go  
thy way,

Suffer and work and strive for Jesus'  
sake :—

• Who tells thee what to-morrow  
keeps in store ?

*2 March 1850 to before 1886.*

THEY lie at rest, our blessed dead ;  
The dews drop cool above their  
head,

They knew not when fleet summer  
fled.

Together all, yet each alone ;  
Each laid at rest beneath his own  
Smooth turf or white allotted stone.

When shall our slumber sink so  
deep,

And eyes that wept and eyes that  
weep

Weep not in the sufficient sleep ?

God be with you, our great and  
small,

Our loves, our best beloved of all,  
Our own beyond the salt sea-wall.

*Before 1886.*

'Ye that fear Him, both small and great.'

GREAT or small below,  
Great or small above ;

Be we Thine, whom Thou dost know  
And love :

First or last on earth,  
First or last in Heaven ;  
Only weightied with Thy worth,  
And shriven.

Wise or ignorant,  
Strong or weak ; Amen ;  
Sifted now, cast down, in want :—  
But then ?

Then,—when sun nor moon,  
Time nor death, finds place,  
Seeing in the eternal noon  
Thy Face :

Then,—when tears and sighing,  
Changes, sorrows, cease ;  
Living by Thy Life undying  
In peace :

Then,—when all creation  
Keeps its jubilee,  
Crowned amid Thy holy nation ;  
Crowned, discrowned, in adoration  
Of Thee.

*Circa 1877.*

Called to be Saints.

THE lowest place. Ah, Lord, how  
steep and high  
That lowest place whereon a saint  
shall sit !

Which of us halting, trembling,  
pressing nigh,  
Shall quite attain to it ?

Yet, Lord, Thou pressest nigh to  
hail and grace  
Some happy soul, it may be still  
unfit

For Right Hand or for Left Hand,  
but whose place  
Waits there prepared for it.

*Before 1886.*

THE sinner's own fault ? So it was.  
If every own fault found us out,  
Dogged us and hedged us round  
about,

What comfort should we take because  
Not half our due we thus wrung  
out ?

Clearly his own fault. Yet I think  
My fault in part, who did not pray  
But lagged and would not lead  
the way.

I, haply, proved his missing link.  
God help us both to mend and  
pray.

*Before 1886.*

WHO cares for earthly bread tho'  
white ?

Nay, heavenly sheaf of harvest  
corn !

Who cares for earthly crown to-night ?  
Nay, heavenly crown to-morrow  
morn !

I will not wander left or right,  
The straightest road is shortest  
too ;

And since we hold all hope in view  
And triumph where is no more pain,  
To-night I bid good night to you  
And bid you meet me there again.

*Before 1886.*

LAUGHING Life cries at the feast,—  
Craving Death cries at the door,—  
'Fish or fowl or fatted beast ?'

'Come with me, thy feast is o'er.'—  
'Wreathe the violets.'—'Watch them  
fade.'—

'I am sunshine.'—'I am shade :  
I am the sun-burying west.'—  
'I am pleasure.'—'I am rest :  
Come with me, for I am best.'

*Before 1886.*

The end is not yet.

HOME by different ways. Yet all  
Homeward bound thro' prayer  
and praise,  
Young with old, and great with  
small,  
Home by different ways.

Many nights and many days  
Wind must bluster, rain must fall,  
Quake the quicksand, shift the  
haze.

Life hath called and death will call  
Saints who praying kneel at gaze,  
Ford the flood or leap the wall,  
Home by different ways.

*Before 1886.*

WHO would wish back the Saints  
upon our rough  
Wearisome road?  
Wish back a breathless soul  
Just at the goal?  
My soul, praise God  
For all dear souls which have enough.

I would not fetch one back to hope  
with me  
A hope deferred,  
To taste a cup that slips  
From thirsting lips:—  
Hath he not heard  
And seen what was to hear and see?

How could I stand to answer the  
rebuke  
If one should say:  
'O friend of little faith,  
Good was my death,  
And good my day  
Of rest, and good the sleep I took?'

*13 December 1861.*

R

'That which hath been is named already,  
and it is known that it is Man.'

'EYE hath not seen':—yet man  
hath known and weighed  
A hundred thousand marvels that  
have been:  
What is it which (the Word of Truth  
hath said)  
Eye hath not seen?

'Ear hath not heard':—yet harpings  
of delight,  
Trumpets of triumph, song and  
spoken word,  
Man knows them all: what lovelier,  
loftier might  
Hath ear not heard?

'Nor heart conceived':—yet man  
hath now desired  
Beyond all reach, beyond his hope  
believed,  
Loved beyond death: what fire shall  
yet be fired  
No heart conceived?

'Deep calls to deep':—man's depth  
would be despair  
But for God's deeper depth: we  
sow to reap.  
Have patience, wait, betake ourselves  
to prayer:  
Deep answereth deep.

*Before 1886.*

OF each sad word which is more  
sorrowful,  
'Sorrow' or 'Disappointment'?  
I have heard  
Subtle inflections, baffling subtlest  
rule,  
Of each sad word.

K

Sorrow can mourn: and lo a  
mourning bird  
Sings sweetly to sweet echoes of its  
dile,  
While silent disappointment  
broods unstirred.

Yet both nurse hope, where Penitence  
keeps school  
Who makes fools wise and saints  
of them that erred:  
Wise men shape stepping stone, or  
curb, or tool,  
Of each sad word.  
*Before 1886.*

I see that all things come to an end.

## I

No more! while sun and planets fly,  
And wind and storm and seasons  
four,  
And while we live and while we  
die,—  
No more.

Nevertheless old ocean's roar,  
And wide earth's multitudinous cry,  
And echo's pent reverberant store,

Shall hush to silence by and by:  
Ah rosy world gone cold and  
hoar!  
Man opes no more a mortal eye,  
No more.  
*Before 1886.*

But Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.

## II

ONCE again to wake, nor wish to  
sleep;  
Once again to feel, nor feel a pain!

Rouse thy soul to watch and pray  
and weep  
Once again.

Hope afresh, for hope shall not  
be vain:  
Start afresh along the exceeding  
steep  
Road to glory, long and rough  
and plain.

Sow and reap: for while these  
moments creep,  
Time and earth and life are on  
the wane:  
Now, in tears; to-morrow, laugh  
and reap  
Once again.  
*Before 1886.*

Sursum Corda.

'LIFT up your hearts.' 'We lift  
them up.' Ah me!  
I cannot, Lord, lift up my heart to  
Thee:  
Stoop, lift it up, that where Thou art  
I too may be.

'Give Me thy heart.' I would not  
say Thee nay,  
But have no power to keep or give  
away  
My heart: stoop, Lord, and take it  
to Thyself to-day.

Stoop, Lord, as once before, now  
once anew;  
Stoop, Lord, and hearken, hearken,  
Lord, and do,  
And take my will, and take my heart,  
and take me too.  
*Before 1886.*



O YE, who are not dead and fit  
Like blasted tree beside the pit  
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of love, whereof  
The force wilds earth and heaven  
above :

Who knows not love begetteth love ?

Love poises earth in space, Love rolls  
Wide worlds rejoicing on their poles,  
And girds them round with aureoles.

Love lights the sun, Love thro' the  
dark

Lights the moon's evanescent arc,  
Lights up the star, lights up the spark.

O ye who taste that love is sweet,  
Set waymarks for all doubtful feet  
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing notes of love : that some who  
hear

Far off inert may lend an ear,  
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead life of love : that others who  
Behold your life may kindle too  
With love, and cast their lot with you.

*Before 1886.*

WHERE shall I find a white rose  
blowing ?—

Out in the garden where all sweets  
be.—

But out in my garden the snow was  
snowing

And never a white rose opened for  
me.

Nought but snow and a wind were  
blowing

And snowing.

Where shall I find a blush rose  
blushing ?—

On the garden wall or the garden  
bed.—

But out in my garden the rain was  
rushing

And never a blush rose raised its  
head.

Nothing glowing, flushing or blush-  
ing :

Rain rushing.

Where shall I find a red rose bud-  
ding ?—

Out in the garden where all things  
grow.—

But out in my garden a flood was  
flooding

And never a red rose began to  
blow.

Out in a flooding what should be  
budding ?

All flooding !

Now is winter and now is sorrow,  
No roses but only thorns to-  
day :

Thorns will put on roses to-morrow,  
Winter and sorrow scudding away.

No more winter and no more sorrow  
To-morrow.

*Circa 1884.*

Redeeming the Time.

A LIFE of hope deferred too often is  
A life of wasted opportunities ;

A life of perished hope too often is

A life of all-lost opportunities :

Yet hope is but the flower and not  
the root,

And hope is still the flower and not  
the fruit ;—

Arise and sow and weed : a day  
shall come

When also thou shalt keep thy  
harvest home.

*Before 1886.*

Now they desire a Better Country.

LOVE said nay, while Hope kept  
saying

All his sweetest say,  
Hope so keen to start a-maying !—  
Love said nay.

Love was bent to watch and pray ;  
Long the watching, long the praying ;  
Hope grew drowsy, pale and grey.

Hope in dreams set off a-straying,  
All his dream-world flushed by  
May ;

While unslumbering, praying, weigh-  
ing,

Love said nay.

*Before 1886.*

#### A CASTLE-BUILDER'S WORLD

The line of confusion, and the stones of  
emptiness.

UNRIPE harvest there hath none to  
reap it

From the misty gusty place,  
Unripe vineyard there hath none to  
keep it

In unprofitable space.  
Living men and women are not found  
there,

Only masks in flocks and shoals ;  
Flesh - and - bloodless hazy masks  
surround there

Ever wavering orbs and poles ;  
Flesh-and-bloodless vapid masks  
abound there,  
Shades of bodies without souls.

*Before 1886.*

These all wait upon Thee.

INNOCENT eyes not ours  
Are made to look on flowers,  
Eyes of small birds and insects  
small :

Morn after summer morn  
The sweet rose on her thorn  
Opens her bosom to them all.  
The least and last of things .  
That soar on quivering wings,  
Or crawl among the grass blades  
out of sight,  
Have just as clear a right  
To their appointed portion of delight  
As Queens or Kings.

*22 January 1853.*

' Doeth well . . . doeth better.'

My love whose heart is tender said  
to me,

' A moon lacks light except her  
sun befriend her.

Let us keep tryst in heaven, dear  
Friend,' said she,  
My love whose heart is tender.

From such a loftiness no words  
could bend her :  
Yet still she spoke of ' us ' and spoke  
as ' we,'

Her hope substantial, while my  
hope grew slender.

Now keeps she tryst beyond earth's  
utmost sea,

Wholly at rest, tho' storms should  
toss and rend her ;

And still she keeps my heart and  
keeps its key,  
My love whose heart is tender.

*Before 1886.*

OUR heaven must be within our-  
selves,  
Our home and heaven the work  
of faith  
All thro' this race of life which shelves  
Downward to death.

So faith shall build the boundary  
wall,  
And hope shall plant the secret  
bower,  
That both may show magnificent  
With gem and flower.

While over all a dome must spread,  
And love shall be that dome  
above ;  
And deep foundations must be laid,  
And these are love.

*Before 1886.*

Vanity of Vanities.

OF all the downfalls in the world,  
The flutter of an Autumn leaf  
Grows grievous by suggesting  
grief :

Who thought, when Spring was first  
unfurled,  
Of this ? The wide world lay em-  
pearled ;  
Who thought of frost that nips the  
world ?

Sigh on, my ditty.

There lurk a hundred subtle stings  
To prick us in our daily walk :  
An apple cankered on its stalk,  
A robin snared for all his wings,  
A voice that sang but never sings ;  
Yea, sight or sound or silence stings.  
Kind Lord, show pity.

*6 August 1858.*

THE hills are tipped with sunshine,  
while I walk  
In shadows dim and cold :  
The unawakened rose sleeps on her  
stalk  
In a bud's fold,  
Until the sun flood all the world  
with gold.

The hills are crowned with glory,  
and the glow  
Flows widening down apace :  
Unto the sunny hill-tops I, set low,  
Lift a tired face,—  
Ah happy rose, content to wait  
for grace !

How tired a face, how tired a brain,  
how tired  
A heart I lift, who long  
For something never felt but still  
desired ;

Sunshine and song,  
Song where the choirs of sunny  
heaven stand choired.

*Before 1893.*

SCARCE tolerable life, which all life  
long  
Is dominated by one dread of  
death ;  
Is such life, life ? if so who  
pondereth  
May call salt sweetness or call dis-  
cord song.

Ah me, this solitude where swarms  
a throng !

Life slowly grows and dwindles  
breath by breath :  
Death slowly grows on us ; no  
word it saith,  
Its cords all lengthened and its  
pillars strong.

Life dies apace, a life that but deceives :

Death reigns as tho' it lived, and yet is dead :

Where is the life that dies not but that lives ?

The sweet long life, immortal, ever young,

True life that woos us with a silver tongue

Of hope, much said and much more left unsaid.

*Circa 1884.*

ALL heaven is blazing yet

With the meridian sun :

Make haste, unshadowing sun, make haste to set ;

O lifeless life, have done.

I choose what once I chose ;

What once I willed, I will :

Only the heart its own bereavement knows ;

O clamorous heart, lie still.

That which I chose, I choose ;

That which I willed, I will ;

That which I once refused, I still refuse :

O hope deferred, be still.

That which I chose and choose

And will is Jesus' Will :

He hath not lost his life who seems to lose :

O hope deferred, hope still.

*Before 1886.*

Balm in Gilead.

HEARTSEASE I found, where Love-lies-bleeding

Empurpled all the ground :

Whatever flowers I missed unheeding,  
Heartsease I found.

Yet still my garden mound  
Stood sore in need of watering, weeding,  
And binding growths unbound.

Ah when shades fell, to light succeeding,

I scarcely dared look round :

'Love-lies-bleeding' was all my pleading ;

Heartsease I found.

*Before 1886.*

'In the day of his Espousals.'

THAT Song of Songs which is Solomon's

Sinks and rises, and loves and longs,

Thro' temperate zones and torrid zones,

That Song of Songs.

Fair its floating moon with her prongs :

Love is laid for its paving stones :

Right it sings without thought of wrongs.

Doves it hath with music of moans,  
Queens in throngs and damsels

in throngs,

High tones and mysterious undertones,

That Song of Songs.

*Before 1886.*

'She came from the uttermost part of the earth.'

'THE half was not told me,' said Sheba's Queen,

Weighing that wealth of wisdom  
and of gold :

'Thy fame falls short of this that I  
have seen :  
The half was not told.

'Happy thy servants who stand  
to behold,  
Stand to drink in thy gracious  
speech and mien ;  
Happy, thrice happy, the flock of  
thy fold.

'As the darkened moon while a  
shadow between  
Her face and her kindling sun is  
rolled,  
I depart ; but my heart keeps  
memory green :  
The half was not told.'  
*Before 1886.*

ALLELUIA ! or Alas ! my heart is  
crying :  
So yours is sighing ;  
Or replying with content undying,  
Alleluia !  
  
'Alas' grieves overmuch for pain  
that is ending,  
Hurt that is mending,  
Life descending soon to be ascend-  
ing.—  
Alleluia !  
*Before 1893.*

THE Passion Flower hath sprung  
up tall,  
Hath east and west its arms  
outspread ;  
The heliotrope shoots up its head  
To clear the shadow of the wall :  
Down looks the Passion Flower,  
The heliotrope looks upward still,  
Hour by hour  
On the heavenward hill.

The Passion Flower blooms red or  
white,  
A shadowed white, a cloudless  
red ;  
Caressingly it droops its head,  
Its leaves, its tendrils, from the  
light :  
Because that lowlier flower  
Looks up, but mounts not half so  
high,  
Hour by hour  
Tending toward the sky.  
*Before 1893.*

God's Acre.

HAIL, garden of confident hope !  
Where sweet seeds are quickening  
in darkness and cold ;  
For how sweet and how young  
will they be  
When they pierce thro' the mould.  
Balm, myrtle, and heliotrope  
There watch and there wait out  
of sight for their Sun :  
While the Sun, which they see  
not, doth see  
Each and all one by one.  
*Before 1893.*

The Flowers appear on the Earth.

YOUNG girls wear flowers,  
Young brides a flowery wreath,  
But next we plant them  
In garden plots of death.  
Whose lot is best—  
The maiden's curtained rest,  
Or bride's whose hoped-for sweet  
May yet outstrip her feet ?  
Ah what are such as these  
To death's sufficing ease ?  
He sleeps indeed who sleeps in  
peace  
Where night and morning meet.

Dear are the blossoms

For bride's or maiden's head,  
But dearer planted

Around our blessed dead.

Those mind us of decay

And joys that fade away ;

These preach to us perfection,  
Long love and resurrection.

We make our graveyards fair,

For spirit-like birds of air,

For Angels may be finding there

Lost Eden's own delection.

26 March 1855.

'Thou knewest . . . thou oughtest  
therefore.'

BEHOLD in heaven a floating dazzling  
cloud,

So dazzling that I could but cry  
Alas !

Alas, because I felt how low I was ;

Alas, within my spirit if not aloud,

Foreviewing my last breathless bed  
and shroud :

Thus pondering, I glanced down-  
ward on the grass ;

And the grass bowed when airs of  
heaven would pass,

Lifting itself again when it had  
bowed.

That grass spake comfort ; weak it  
was and low,

Yet strong enough and high  
enough to bend

In homage at a message from  
the sky :

As the grass did and prospered,  
so will I ;

Tho' knowing little, doing what I  
know,

And strong in patient weakness  
till the end.

Before 1893.

Go in Peace.

CAN peach renew lost bloom,

Or violet lost perfume,

Or sullied snow turn white as over-  
night ?

Man cannot compass it, yet never  
fear :

The leper Naaman

Shows what God will and can.

God Who worked there is working  
here ;

Wherefore let shame, not gloom,  
betinge thy brow.

God Who worked then is working  
now.

Before 1893.

Half dead.

O CHRIST the Life, look on me  
where I lie

Ready to die :

O Good Samaritan, nay, pass not  
by.

O Christ, my Life, pour in Thine oil  
and wine

To keep me Thine ;

Me ever Thine, and Thee for ever  
mine.

Watch by Thy saints and sinners,  
watch by all

Thy great and small :

Once Thou didst call us all,—O  
Lord, recall.

Think how Thy saints love sinners,  
how they pray

And hope alway,

And thereby grow more like Thee  
day by day.



O Saint of saints, if those with  
 prayer and vow  
 Succour us now. . . .  
 It was not they died for us, it was  
 Thou.

*Before 1893.*

'One of the Soldiers with a Spear pierced  
 His Side.'

AH Lord, we all have pierced Thee :  
 wilt Thou be  
 Wroth with us all to slay us all ?  
 Nay, Lord, be this thing far from  
 Thee and me :

By whom should we arise, for we  
 are small,  
 By whom if not by Thee ?

Lord, if of us who pierced Thee  
 Thou spare one,  
 Spare yet one more to love Thy  
 Face,

And yet another of poor souls undone,  
 Another, and another—God of  
 grace,  
 Let mercy overrun.

*Before 1893.*

WHERE love is, there comes sorrow  
 To-day or else to-morrow :  
 Endure the mood,  
 Love only means our good.

Where love is, there comes pleasure  
 With or withouten measure,  
 Early or late  
 Cheering the sorriest state.

Where love is, all perfection  
 Is stored for heart's delection ;  
 For where love is  
 Dwells every sort of bliss.

Who would not choose a sorrow  
 Love's self will cheer to-morrow ?  
 One day of sorrow,  
 Then such a long to-morrow !  
*Before 1886.*

BURY Hope out of sight,  
 No book for it and no bell ;  
 It never could bear the light  
 Even while growing and well :  
 Think if now it could bear  
 The light on its face of care  
 And grey scattered hair.

No grave for Hope in the earth,  
 But deep in that silent soul  
 Which rang no bell for its birth  
 And rings no funeral toll.  
 Cover its once bright head ;  
 Nor odours nor tears be shed :  
 It lived once, it is dead.

Brief was the day of its power,  
 The day of its grace how brief :  
 As the fading of a flower,  
 As the falling of a leaf,  
 So brief its day and its hour ;  
 No bud more and no bower  
 Or hint of a flower.

Shall many wail it ? not so :  
 Shall one bewail it ? not one :  
 Thus it hath been from long ago,  
 Thus it shall be beneath the  
 sun.

O fleet sun, make haste to flee ;  
 O rivers, fill up the sea ;  
 O Death, set the dying free.

The sun nor loiters nor speeds,  
 The rivers run as they ran,  
 Thro' clouds or thro' windy reeds  
 All run as when all began.

Only Death turns at our cries :—  
Lo the Hope we buried with sighs  
Alive in Death's eyes !

*Before 1886.*

A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope.

ALL tears done away with the bitter  
unquiet sea,

Death done away from among  
the living at last,

Man shall say of sorrow—Love  
grant it to thee and me !—

At last, 'It is past.'

Shall I say of pain 'It is past,' nor  
say it with thee,

Thou heart of my heart, thou soul  
of my soul, my Friend ?

Shalt thou say of pain 'It is past,'  
nor say it with me

Beloved to the end ?

*Before 1893.*

ONE woe is past. Come what come  
will,

Thus much is ended and made  
fast :

Two woes may overhang us still ;

One woe is past.

As flowers when winter puffs its  
last

Wake in the vale, trail up the hill,  
Nor wait for skies to overcast ;

So meek souls rally from the chill  
Of pain and fear and poisonous  
blast,

To lift their heads : come good, come  
ill,

One woe is past.

*Before 1893.*

Take no thought for the morrow.

WHO knows ? God knows : and  
what He knows

Is well and best.

The darkness hideth not from Him,  
but glows

Clear as the morning or the evening  
rose

Of east or west.

Wherefore man's strength is to sit  
still :

Not wasting care

To antedate to-morrow's good or  
ill ;

Yet watching meekly, watching with  
good will,

Watching to prayer.

Some rising or some setting ray  
From east or west,

If not to-day, why then another  
day

Will light each dove upon the home-  
ward way

Safe to her nest.

*Before 1893.*

Consider the Lilies of the field.

SOLOMON most glorious in array  
Put not on his glories without  
care :—

Clothe us as Thy lilies of a day,

As the lilies Thou accountest fair,

Lilies of Thy making,

Of Thy love partaking,

Filling with free fragrance earth  
and air :

Thou Who gatherest lilies, gather  
us and wear.

*Before 1893.*

'Son, remember.'

I LAID beside thy gate am Lazarus ;  
See me or see me not, I still am  
there,

Hungry and thirsty, sore and sick  
and bare,

Dog-comforted and crumbs-solici-  
tous :

While thou in all thy ways art  
sumptuous,

Daintily clothed, with dainties for  
thy fare :

Thus a world's wonder thou art  
quit of care,

And, be I seen or not seen, I am thus.  
One day a worm for thee, a worm  
for me :

With my worm angel songs and  
trumpet-burst

And plenitude an end of all  
desire :

But what for thee, alas ! but what  
for thee ?

Fire and an unextinguishable  
thirst,

Thirst in an unextinguishable  
fire.

*Before 1893.*

Heaviness may endure for a night, but  
Joy cometh in the morning.

NO thing is great on this side of the  
grave,

Nor any thing of any stable worth :  
Whatso is born from earth returns  
to earth :

No thing we grasp proves half the  
thing we crave :

The tidal wave shrinks to the ebbing  
wave :

Laughter is folly, madness lurks  
in mirth :

Mankind sets off a-dying from the  
birth :

Life is a losing game, with what to  
save ?

Thus I sat mourning like a mournful  
owl,

And like a doleful dragon made ado,  
Companion of all monsters of  
the dark :

When lo the light cast off its nightly  
cowl,

And up to heaven flashed a  
carolling lark,

And all creation sang its hymn  
anew.

While all creation sang its hymn anew  
What could I do but sing a stave  
in tune ?

Spectral on high hung pale the  
vanishing moon

Where a last gleam of stars hung  
paling too.

Lark's lay—a cockcrow—with a  
scattered few

Soft early chirpings—with a tender  
croon

Of doves—a hundred thousand  
calls, and soon

A hundred thousand answers sweet  
and true.

These set me singing too at un-  
awares :

One note for all delights and  
charities,

One note for hope reviving with  
the light,

One note for every lovely thing  
that is ;

Till while I sang my heart shook off  
its cares

And revelled in the land of no  
more night.

*Before 1886.*

The Will of the Lord be done.

O LORD, fulfil Thy Will,  
Be the days few or many, good or ill :  
Prolong them, to suffice  
For offering up ourselves Thy  
sacrifice ;  
Shorten them if Thou wilt,  
To make in righteousness an end of  
guilt.

Yea, they will not be long  
To souls who learn to sing a patient  
song ;

Yea, short they will not be  
To souls on tiptoe to flee home to  
Thee.

O Lord, fulfil Thy Will :  
Make Thy Will ours, and keep us  
patient still,  
Be the days few or many, good or ill.

*Before 1893.*

Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.

TREASURE plies a feather,  
Pleasure spreadeth wings,  
Taking flight together,—  
Ah my cherished things !

Fly away, poor pleasure,  
That art so brief a thing :  
Fly away, poor treasure,  
That hast so swift a wing.

Pleasure, to be pleasure,  
Must come without a wing :  
Treasure, to be treasure,  
Must be a stable thing.

Treasure without feather,  
Pleasure without wings,  
Elsewhere dwell together  
And are heavenly things.

*Before 1886.*

Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

‘ONE sorrow more ? I thought the  
tale complete.’—

He bore amiss who grudges what  
he bore :

Stretch out thy hands and urge thy  
feet to meet

One sorrow more.

Yea, make thy count for two or  
three or four :

The kind Physician will not slack  
to treat

His patient while there's rankling  
in the sore.

Bear up in anguish, ease will yet be  
sweet ;

Bear up all day, for night has  
rest in store :

Christ bears thy burden with thee,  
rise and greet

One sorrow more.

*Before 1886.*

‘Then shall ye shout.’

It seems an easy thing  
Mayhap one day to sing ;  
Yet the next day  
We cannot sing or say.

Keep silence with good heart,  
While silence fits our part :  
Another day  
We shall both sing and say.

Keep silence, counting time  
To strike in at the chime :  
Prepare to sound,—  
Our part is coming round.

Can we not sing or say?  
 In silence let us pray,  
 And meditate  
 Our love-song while we wait.  
*Before 1886.*

EVERYTHING that is born must die;  
 Everything that can sigh may  
 sing;  
 Rocks in equal balance, low or high,  
 Everything.

Honeycomb is weighed against a  
 sting;  
 Hope and fear take turns to touch  
 the sky;  
 Height and depth respond alter-  
 nating.

O my soul, spread wings of love to  
 fly,  
 Wings of dove that soars on  
 home-bound wing:  
 Love trusts Love, till Love shall  
 justify  
 Everything.  
*Before 1886.*

LORD, grant us calm, if calm can  
 set forth Thee;  
 Or tempest, if a tempest set Thee  
 forth;  
 Wind from the east or west or  
 south or north,  
 Or congelation of a silent sea,  
 With stillness of each tremulous  
 aspen tree.

Still let fruit fall, or hang upon the  
 tree;  
 Still let the east and west, the  
 south and north,

Curb in their winds, or plough a  
 thundering sea;  
 Still let the earth abide to set  
 Thee forth,  
 Or vanish like a smoke to set forth  
 Thee.  
*Before 1893.*

Changing Chimes.

IT was not warning that our fathers  
 lacked,  
 It is not warning that we lack  
 to-day.  
 The Voice that cried still cries:  
 'Rise up and act:  
 Watch alway,—watch and pray,  
 —watch alway,—  
 All men.'

Alas, if aught was lacked goodwill  
 was lacked;  
 Alas, goodwill is what we lack  
 to-day.  
 O gracious Voice, grant grace that  
 all may act,  
 Watch and act,—watch and pray,  
 —watch alway.—  
 Amen.

*Before 1893.*

Thy Servant will go and fight with  
 this Philistine.

SORROW of saints is sorrow of a  
 day,  
 Gladness of saints is gladness  
 evermore:  
 Send on thy hope, send on thy  
 will before,  
 To chant God's praise along the  
 narrow way.  
 Stir up His praises if the flesh  
 would sway,

Exalt His praises if the world  
 press sore,  
 Peal out His praises if black  
 Satan roar  
 A hundred thousand lies to say  
 them nay.  
 Devil and Death and Hades, three-  
 fold cord  
 Not quickly broken, front thee to  
 thy face ;  
 Front thou them with a face of  
 tenfold flint :  
 Shout for the battle, David !  
 never stint  
 Body or breath or blood, but,  
 proof in grace,  
 Die for thy Lord, as once for thee  
 thy Lord.

*Before 1893.*

THRO' burden and heat of the day  
 How weary the hands and the  
 feet  
 That labour with scarcely a stay,  
 Thro' burden and heat !

Tired toiler whose sleep shall be  
 sweet,  
 Kneel down, it will rest thee to pray :  
 Then forward, for daylight is fleet.

Cool shadows show lengthening and  
 grey,  
 Cool twilight will soon be com-  
 plete :  
 What matters this wearisome way  
 Thro' burden and heat ?

*Before 1886.*

' Then I commended Mirth.'

' A MERRY heart is a continual  
 feast.'

Then take we life and all things  
 in good part :

To fast grows festive while we keep  
 at least  
 A merry heart.

Well pleased with nature and well  
 pleased with art ;  
 A merry heart makes cheer for man  
 and beast,  
 And fancies music in a creaking  
 cart.

Some day, a restful heart whose toils  
 have ceased,  
 A heavenly heart gone home from  
 earthly mart :  
 To-day, blow wind from west or  
 wind from east,  
 A merry heart.

*Before 1886.*

SORROW hath a double voice,  
 Sharp to-day but sweet to-morrow :  
 Wait in patience, hope, rejoice,  
 Tried friends of sorrow.

Pleasure hath a double taste,  
 Sweet to-day but sharp to-morrow :  
 Friends of pleasure, rise in haste,  
 Make friends with sorrow.

Pleasure set aside to-day  
 Comes again to rule to-morrow :  
 Welcomed sorrow will not stay,  
 Farewell to sorrow !

*Before 1886.*

SHADOWS to-day, while shadows  
 show God's Will.

Light were not good except He  
 sent us light.

Shadows to-day, because this day  
 is night



Whose marvels and whose mysteries  
fulfil

Their course and deep in darkness  
serve Him still.

Thou dim aurora, on the extremest  
height

Of airy summits wax not over-  
bright ;

Refrain thy rose, refrain thy daffo-  
dil.

Until God's Word go forth to kindle  
thee

And garland thee and bid thee  
stoop to us,

Blush in the heavenly choirs  
and glance not down :

To-day we race in darkness for  
a crown,

In darkness for beatitude to be,  
In darkness for the city luminous.

*Before 1893.*

Truly the Light is sweet.

LIGHT colourless doth colour all  
things else :

Where light dwells pleasure dwells  
And peace excels.

Then rise and shine,  
Thou shadowed soul of mine,  
And let a cheerful rainbow make  
thee fine.

Light, fountain of all beauty and  
delight,

Leads day forth from the night,  
Turns blackness white.

Light waits for thee  
Where all have eyes to see :

Oh well is thee, and happy shalt  
thou be.

*Before 1893.*

Are ye not much better than they ?

THE twig sprouteth,  
The moth outeth,  
The plant springeth,  
The bird singeth :  
Tho' little we sing to-day  
Yet are we better than they ;  
Tho' growing with scarce a showing,  
Yet, please God, we are growing.

The twig teacheth,  
The moth preacheth,  
The plant vaunteth,  
The bird chanteth,  
God's mercy overflowing,  
Merciful past man's knowing.  
Please God to keep us growing  
Till the awful day of mowing.

*Before 1893.*

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house.

WISEST of sparrows that sparrow  
which sitteth alone

Perched on the housetop, its own  
upper chamber, for nest ;

Wisest of swallows that swallow  
which timely has flown

Over the turbulent sea to the land  
of its rest :

Wisest of sparrows and swallows,  
if I were as wise !

Wisest of spirits that spirit which  
dwelleth apart

Hid in the Presence of God for a  
chapel and nest,

Sending a wish and a will and a  
passionate heart

Over the eddy of life to that  
Presence in rest :

Seated alone and in peace till  
God bids it arise.

*Before 1893.*

I am small and of no reputation.

THE least, if so I am ;

If so, less than the least,

May I reach heaven to glorify the  
Lamb

And sit down at the Feast.

I fear and I am small,

Whence am I of good cheer ;

For I, who hear Thy call, have  
heard Thee call

To Thee the small who fear.

*Before 1893.*

O CHRIST my God Who seest the  
unseen,

O Christ my God Who knowest  
the unknown,

Thy mighty Blood was poured  
forth to atone

For every sin that can be or hath  
been.

O Thou Who seest what I cannot  
see,

Thou Who didst love us all so  
long ago,

O Thou Who knowest what I  
must not know,

Remember all my hope, remember  
me.

*Before 1886.*

YEA, if Thou wilt, Thou canst put  
up Thy sword ;

But what if Thou shouldst sheathe  
it to the hilt

Within the heart that sues to Thee,  
O Lord ?

Yea, if Thou wilt.

For if Thou wilt Thou canst purge  
out the guilt

Of all, of any, even the most ab-  
horred :

Thou canst pluck down, rebuild,  
build up the unbuilt.

Who wanders canst Thou gather by  
love's cord ?

Who sinks, uplift from the under-  
sucking silt

To set him on Thy rock within Thy  
ward ?

Yea, if Thou wilt.

*Before 1886.*

SWEETNESS of rest when Thou  
sheddest rest,

Sweetness of patience till then ;

Only the Will of our God is best  
For all the millions of men.

For all the millions on earth to-day,  
On earth and under the earth ;

Waiting for earth to vanish away,  
Waiting to come to the birth.

*Before 1893.*

O FOOLISH Soul! to make thy  
count

For languid falls and much for-  
given,

When like a flame thou mightest  
mount

To storm and carry heaven.

A life so faint,—is this to live ?

A goal so mean,—is this a goal ?

Christ love thee, remedy, forgive,  
Save thee, O foolish Soul.

*Before 1893.*

BEFORE the beginning Thou hast  
foreknown the end,  
Before the birthday the death-bed  
was seen of Thee :

Cleanse what I cannot cleanse, mend  
what I cannot mend,  
O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful  
to me.

While the end is drawing near I  
know not mine end ;  
Birth I recall not, my death I  
cannot foresee :

O God, arise to defend, arise to  
befriend,

O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful  
to me.

*Before 1893.*

THE goal in sight ! Look up and  
sing,

Set faces full against the light,  
Welcome with rapturous welcoming  
The goal in sight.

Let be the left, let be the right :  
Straight forward make your footsteps  
ring

A loud alarum thro' the night.

Death hunts you, yea, but reft of  
sting ;

Your bed is green, your shroud  
is white :

Hail Life and Death and all that  
bring

The goal in sight.

*Before 1886.*

LOOKING back along life's trodden  
way,

Gleams and greenness linger on  
the track ;

R

Distance melts and mellows all  
to-day,  
Looking back.

Rose and purple and a silvery grey,  
Is that cloud the cloud we called  
so black ?

Evening harmonizes all to-day,  
Looking back.

Foolish feet so prone to halt or stray,  
Foolish heart so restive on the  
rack !

Yesterday we sighed, but not to-day,  
Looking back.

*Before 1886.*

## THE WATCHERS

SHE fell asleep among the flowers  
In the sober autumn hours.

Three there are about her bed,  
At her side and feet and head.

At her head standeth the Cross  
For which all else she counted loss :

Still and steadfast at her feet  
Doth her Guardian Angel sit :

Prayers of truest love abide  
Wrapping her on every side.

The holy Cross standeth alone,  
Beneath the white moon, whitest  
stone.

Evil spirits come not near  
Its shadow, shielding from all fear :

Once she bore it in her breast,  
Now it certifies her rest.

L

Humble violets grow around  
Its base, sweetening the grassy  
ground,

Leaf-hidden : so she hid from praise  
Of men her pious holy ways.

Higher about it, twining close,  
Clingeth a crimson thorny rose :

So from her heart's good seed of love  
Thorns sprang below, flowers spring  
above.

Though yet his vigil doth not cease,  
Her Angel sits in perfect peace,

With white folded wings : for she  
He watches now is pure as he.

He watches with his loving eyes  
For the day when she shall rise :

When full of glory and of grace  
She shall behold him face to face.

Though she is safe for ever, yet  
Human love doth not forget :

But prays that in her deep  
Grave she may sleep a blessed sleep,

Till when time and the world are  
past  
She may find mercy at the last.

So these three do hedge her in  
From sorrow, as death does from sin.

So freed from earthly taint and pain  
May they all meet in heaven.  
Amen.

25 May 1850.

## THE THREE ENEMIES

### THE FLESH

'SWEET, thou art pale.'

'More pale to see,  
Christ hung upon the cruel tree  
And bore His Father's wrath for me.'

'Sweet, thou art sad.'

'Beneath a rod  
More heavy, Christ for my sake trod  
The winepress of the wrath of God.'

'Sweet, thou art weary.'

'Not so Christ ;  
Whose mighty love of me sufficed  
For Strength, Salvation, Eucharist.'

'Sweet, thou art footsore.'

'If I bleed,  
His feet have bled ; yea in my need  
His Heart once bled for mine indeed.'

### THE WORLD

'Sweet, thou art young.'

'So He was young  
Who for my sake in silence hung  
Upon the Cross with Passion wrung.'

'Look, thou art fair.'

'He was more fair  
Than men, Who deigned for me to  
wear  
A visage marred beyond compare.'

'And thou hast riches.'

'Daily bread :  
All else is His : Who, living, dead,  
For me lacked where to lay His  
Head.'

'And life is sweet.'

'It was not so  
To Him, Whose Cup did overflow  
With mine unutterable woe.'

## THE DEVIL

'Thou drinkest deep.'

'When Christ would sup

He drained the dregs from out my  
cup :

So how should I be lifted up ?'

'Thou shalt win Glory.'

'In the skies,

Lord Jesus, cover up mine eyes

Lest they should look on vanities.'

'Thou shalt have Knowledge.'

'Helpless dust !

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust :

Answer Thou for me, Wise and Just.'

'And Might.'—

'Get thee behind me. Lord,  
Who hast redeemed and not abhorred  
My soul, oh keep it by Thy Word.'

15 June 1851.

BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE  
DOOR AND KNOCK

WHO standeth at the gate?—A  
woman old,

A widow from the husband of her  
love.

'O lady, stay, this wind is piercing  
cold,

Oh look at the keen frosty moon  
above ;

I have no home, am hungry, feeble,  
poor.'—

'I'm really very sorry, but I can  
Do nothing for you ; there's the  
clergyman,'

The lady said, and shivering closed  
the door.

Who standeth at the gate?—Way-  
worn and pale

A grey-haired man asks charity  
again.

'Kind lady, I have journeyed far,  
and fail

Through weariness ; for I have  
begged in vain

Some shelter, and can find no  
lodging-place.'—

She answered : 'There's the work-  
house very near ;

Go, for they'll certainly receive  
you there'—

Then shut the door against his  
pleading face.

Who standeth at the gate?—A  
stunted child,

Her sunk eyes sharpened with  
precocious care.

'O lady, save me from a home  
defiled,

From shameful sights and sounds  
that taint the air :

Take pity on me, teach me some-  
thing good.'—

'For shame, why don't you work  
instead of cry ?

I keep no young impostors here,  
not I.'

She slammed the door, indignant  
where she stood.

Who standeth at the gate, and will  
be heard ?

Arise, O woman, from thy comforts  
now :

Go forth again to speak the careless  
word,

The cruel word unjust, with  
hardened brow.

But who is this, that standeth not to  
pray

As once, but terrible to judge thy  
sin ?

This whom thou wouldst not suc-  
cour nor take in  
Nor teach but leave to perish by the  
way.

'Thou didst it not unto the least of  
these,  
And in them hast not done it unto  
Me.

Thou wast as a princess rich and at  
ease—

Now sit in dust and howl for  
poverty.

Three times I stood beseeching at  
thy gate,

Three times I came to bless thy  
soul and save :

But now I come to judge for what  
I gave,

And now at length thy sorrow is too  
late.'

*1 December 1851.*

### ADVENT

'COME,' Thou dost say to Angels,  
To blessed Spirits, 'Come' :

'Come,' to the lambs of Thine own  
flock,

Thy little ones, 'Come home.'

'Come,' from the many-mansioned  
house

The gracious word is sent ;

'Come,' from the ivory palaces  
Unto the Penitent.

O Lord, restore us deaf and blind,

Unclose our lips though dumb :

Then say to us, 'I come with speed,'  
And we will answer, 'Come.'

*12 December 1851.*

### ALL SAINTS

THEY have brought gold and spices  
to my King,

Incense and precious stuffs and  
ivory :

O holy Mother mine, what can I  
bring

That so my Lord may deign to  
look on me ?

They sing a sweeter song than I can  
sing,

All crowned and glorified ex-  
ceedingly :

I, bound on earth, weep for my tres-  
passing,—

They sing the song of love in  
heaven, set free.

Then answered me my Mother, and  
her voice

Spake to my heart, yea answered  
in my heart :

'Sing, saith He to the heavens, to  
earth, Rejoice :

Thou also lift thy heart to Him  
above :

He seeks not thine, but thee such  
as thou art,

For lo His banner over thee is Love.'

*20 January 1852.*

### EYE HATH NOT SEEN

OUR feet shall tread upon the stars  
Less bright than we.

The everlasting shore shall bound  
A fairer sea

Than that which cold

Now glitters in the sun like gold.

Oh good, oh blest ! but who shall say  
How fair, how fair,



Is the light-region where no cloud  
 Darkens the air,  
 Where weary eyes  
 Rest on the green of Paradise?

There cometh not the wind nor rain  
 Nor sun nor snow :  
 The Trees of Knowledge and of  
 Life

Bud there and blow,  
 Their leaves and fruit  
 Fed from an undecaying root.

There Angels flying to and fro  
 Are not more white  
 Than Penitents some while ago,  
 Now Saints in light :  
 Once soiled and sad—  
 Cleansed now and crowned, fulfilled  
 and glad.

Now yearning through the perfect  
 rest

Perhaps they gaze  
 Earthwards upon their best-beloved  
 In all earth's ways :  
 Longing, but not  
 With pain, as used to be their lot.

The hush of that beatitude  
 Is ages long,  
 Sufficing Virgins, Prophets, Saints,  
 Till the new song  
 Shall be sent up  
 From lips which drained the bitter  
 cup.

If but the thought of Paradise  
 Gives joy on earth,  
 What shall it be to enter there  
 Through second birth?  
 To find once more  
 Our dearest treasure gone before?

To find the Shepherd of the sheep,  
 The Lamb once slain,  
 Who leads His own by living  
 streams—  
 Never again  
 To thirst, or need  
 Aught in green pastures where they  
 feed.

But from the altar comes a cry  
 Awful and strong  
 From martyred Saints : 'How long,'  
 they say,  
 'O Lord, how long,  
 Holy and True,  
 Shall vengeance for our blood be  
 due?'

Then the Lord gives them robes of  
 white,  
 And bids them stay  
 In patience till the time be full  
 For the last day—  
 The day of dread  
 When the last sentence shall be  
 said ;

When heaven and earth shall flee  
 away,  
 And the great deep  
 Shall render up her dead, and earth  
 Her sons that sleep,  
 And day of grace  
 Be hid for ever from Thy face.

Oh hide us, till Thy wrath be past,  
 Our grief, our shame,  
 With Peter and with Magdalene,  
 And him whose name  
 No record tells  
 Who by Thy promise with Thee  
 dwells.

1 May 1852.

# A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK

I WILL accept thy will to do and be,  
Thy hatred and intolerance of sin,  
Thy will at least to love, that burns  
within

And thirsteth after Me :

So will I render fruitful, blessing still,  
The germs and small beginnings  
in thy heart,

Because thy will cleaves to the  
better part.—

Alas, I cannot will.

Dost not thou will, poor soul? Yet  
I receive

The inner unseen longings of the  
soul,

I guide them turning towards Me ;  
I control

And charm hearts till they  
grieve :

If thou desire, it yet shall come to pass,  
Though thou but wish indeed to  
choose My love ;

For I have power in earth and  
heaven above.—

I cannot wish, alas !

What, neither choose nor wish to  
choose ? and yet

I still must strive to win thee and  
constrain :

For thee I hung upon the cross  
in pain,

How then can I forget ?

If thou as yet dost neither love nor  
hate

Nor choose nor wish, — resign  
thyself, be still,

Till I infuse love, hatred, longing,  
will.—

I do not deprecate.

13 June 1852.

# ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WHEN if ever life is sweet,  
Save in heart in all a child,  
A fair virgin undefiled,  
Knelt she at her Saviour's feet :  
While she laid her royal crown,  
Thinking it too mean a thing  
For a solemn offering,  
Careless on the cushions down.

Fair she was as any rose,  
But more pale than lilies white :  
Her eyes full of deep repose  
Seemed to see beyond our sight.  
Hush, she is a holy thing :  
Hush, her soul is in her eyes,  
Seeking far in Paradise  
For her Light, her Love, her King.

16 June 1852.

# MOONSHINE

FAIR the sun riseth,  
Bright as bright can be,  
Fair the sun shineth  
On a fair fair sea.

‘ Across the water  
Wilt thou come with me,  
Miles and long miles, love,  
Over the salt sea ? ’

‘ If thou wilt hold me  
Truly by the hand,  
I will go with thee  
Over sea and sand.

‘ If thou wilt hold me  
That I shall not fall,  
I will go with thee,  
Love, in spite of all.’

Fair the moon riseth  
On her heavenly way,  
Making the waters  
Fairer than by day.

A little vessel  
Rocks upon the sea,  
Where stands a maiden  
Fair as fair can be.

Her smile rejoices  
Though her mouth is mute :  
She treads the vessel  
With her little foot.

Truly he holds her  
Faithful to his pledge,  
Guiding the vessel  
From the water's edge.

Fair the moon saileth  
With her pale fair light,  
Fair the girl gazeth  
Out into the night.

Saith she, 'Like silver  
Shines thy hair, not gold':  
Saith she, 'I shiver  
In thy steady hold.

'Love,' she saith weeping,  
'Loose thy hold awhile ;  
My heart is freezing  
In thy freezing smile.'

The moon is hidden  
By a silver cloud,  
Fair as a halo  
Or a maiden's shroud.

No more beseeching,  
Ever on they go :  
The vessel rocketh  
Softly to and fro :

And still he holds her  
That she shall not fall,  
Till pale mists whiten  
Dimly over all.

Onward and onward,  
Far across the sea :  
Onward and onward,  
Pale as pale can be :

Onward and onward,  
Ever hand in hand,  
From sun and moonlight  
To another land.

16 June 1852.

## I LOOK FOR THE LORD

OUR wealth has wasted all away,  
Our pleasures have found wings ;  
The night is long until the day ;  
Lord, give us better things—  
A ray of light in thirsty night  
And secret water-springs.

Our love is dead, or sleeps, or else  
Is hidden from our eyes :  
Our silent love, while no man tells  
Or if it lives or dies.  
Oh give us love, O Lord, above  
In changeless Paradise.

Our house is left us desolate,  
Even as Thy word hath said.  
Before our face the way is great ;  
Around us are the dead.  
Oh guide us, save us from the grave,  
As Thou Thy saints hast led.

Lead us where pleasures evermore  
And wealth indeed are placed,

And home on an eternal shore,  
 And love that cannot waste :  
 Where joy Thou art unto the heart,  
 And sweetness to the taste.

28 September 1852.

### THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

WEEP yet awhile,—  
 Weep till that day shall dawn  
 when thou shalt smile :  
 Watch till the day  
 When all save only love shall pass  
 away.

Weep, sick and lonely,  
 Bow thy heart to tears,  
 For none shall guess the secret  
 Of thy griefs and fears.  
 Weep, till the day dawn,  
 Refreshing dew :  
 Weep till the spring :  
 For genial showers  
 Bring up the flowers,  
 And thou shalt sing  
 In summertime of blossoming.

Heart-sick and silent,  
 Weep and watch in pain.  
 Weep for hope perished,  
 Not to live again :  
 Weep for love's hope and fear  
 And passion vain.  
 Watch till the day  
 When all save only love shall pass  
 away.

Then love rejoicing  
 Shall forget to weep :  
 Shall hope or fear no more,  
 Or watch, or sleep,

But only love and cease not,  
 Deep beyond deep.  
 Now we sow love in tears,  
 But then shall reap.  
 Have patience as the Lord's own  
 flock of sheep :  
 Have patience with His love  
 Who died below, who lives for thee  
 above.

23 December 1852.

### WHITSUN EVE

THE white dove cooeth in her downy  
 nest,  
 Keeping her young ones warm be-  
 neath her breast :  
 The white moon saileth through the  
 cool clear sky,  
 Screened by a tender mist in passing  
 by :  
 The white rose buds, with thorns  
 upon its stem,  
 All the more precious and more dear  
 for them :  
 The stream shines silver in the tufted  
 grass,  
 The white clouds scarcely dim it as  
 they pass ;  
 Deep in the valleys lily cups are  
 white,  
 They send up incense all the holy  
 night.  
 Our souls are white, made clean in  
 Blood once shed :  
 White blessed Angels watch around  
 our bed :—  
 O spotless Lamb of God, still keep  
 us so,  
 Thou who wert born for us in time  
 of snow.

18 May 1853.

THERE REMAINETH  
THEREFORE A REST FOR  
THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## I

'Ye have forgotten the exhortation.'

COME, blessed sleep, most full, most  
perfect, come :

Come, sleep, if so I may forget  
the whole ;

Forget my body and forget my  
soul,

Forget how long life is and trouble-  
some.

Come, happy sleep, to soothe my  
heart or numb,

Arrest my weary spirit or control :

Till light be dark to me from pole  
to pole,

And winds and echoes and low songs  
be dumb.

Come, sleep, and lap me into perfect  
calm,

Lap me from all the world and  
weariness :

Come, secret sleep, with thine un-  
uttered psalm,

Safe sheltering in a hidden cool  
recess :

Come, heavy dreamless sleep, and  
close and press

Upon mine eyes thy fingers dropping  
balm.

## II

'Which speaketh unto you as unto  
children.'

ART thou so weary then, poor thirsty  
soul ?

Have patience, in due season thou  
shalt sleep.

Mount yet a little while, the path  
is steep :

Strain yet a little while to reach the  
goal :

Do battle with thyself, achieve,  
control :

Till night come down with blessed  
slumber deep

As love, and seal thine eyes no  
more to weep

Through long tired vigils while the  
planets roll.

Have patience, for thou too shalt  
sleep at length,

Lapt in the pleasant shade of  
Paradise.

My Hands that bled for thee  
shall close thine eyes,

My Heart that bled for thee shall  
be thy rest :

I will sustain with everlasting  
strength,

And thou, with John, shalt lie  
upon My breast.

12 July 1853.

## A HARVEST

O GATE of death, of the blessed  
night,

That shall open not again

On this world of shame and sorrow,

Where slow ages wax and wane,

Where are signs and seasons, days  
and nights,

And mighty winds and rain.

Is the day wearing toward the  
west ?—

Far off cool shadows pass,

A visible refreshment

Across the sultry grass :

Far off low mists are mustering,

A broken shifting mass.

Still in the deepest knowledge  
 Some depth is left unknown :  
 Still in the merriest music lurks  
 A plaintive undertone :  
 Still with the closest friend some  
 throb  
 Of life is felt alone.

Time's summer breath is sweet, his  
 sands  
 Ebb sparkling as they flow,  
 Yet some are sick that this should  
 end  
 Which is from long ago :—  
 Are not the fields already white  
 To harvest in the glow ?—

There shall come another harvest  
 Than was in days of yore :  
 The reapers shall be Angels,  
 Our God shall purge the floor :—  
 No more seed-time, no more harvest,  
 Then for evermore.

1 August 1853.

### THE ELEVENTH HOUR

FAINT and worn and aged  
 One stands knocking at a gate ;  
 Though no light shines in the case-  
 ment,  
 Knocking though so late.  
 It has struck eleven  
 In the courts of heaven,  
 Yet he still doth knock and wait.

While no answer cometh  
 From the heavenly hill,  
 Blessed Angels wonder  
 At his earnest will.  
 Hope and fear but quicken  
 While the shadows thicken :  
 He is knocking, knocking still.

Grim the gate unopened  
 Stands with bar and lock :  
 Yet within the unseen Porter  
 Harkens to the knock.—  
 Doing and undoing,  
 Faint and yet pursuing,  
 This man's feet are on the Rock.

With a cry unceasing  
 Knocketh, prayeth he :  
 ' Lord have mercy on me  
 When I cry to Thee.'  
 With a knock unceasing  
 And a cry increasing :  
 ' O my Lord, remember me.'

Still the Porter standeth,  
 Love-constrained He standeth near,  
 While the cry increaseth  
 Of that love and fear :  
 ' Jesus, look upon me—  
 Christ, hast Thou foregone me?—  
 If I must, I perish here.'

Faint the knocking ceases,  
 Faint the cry and call :  
 Is he lost indeed for ever,  
 Shut without the wall ?  
 Mighty Arms surround him,  
 Arms that sought and found him,  
 Held, withheld, and bore through all.

O celestial mansion,  
 Open wide the door :  
 Crown and robes of whiteness,  
 Stone inscribed before,  
 Flocking Angels bear them ;  
 Stretch thy hand and wear them,  
 Sit thou down for evermore.

5 September 1853.

### SLEEP AT SEA

SOUND the deep waters :—  
 Who shall sound that deep ?—



Too short the plummet,  
 And the watchmen sleep.  
 Some dream of effort  
 Up a toilsome steep ;  
 Some dream of pasture grounds  
 For harmless sheep.

White shapes flit to and fro  
 From mast to mast ;  
 They feel the distant tempest  
 That nears them fast :  
 Great rocks are straight ahead,  
 Great shoals not past ;  
 They shout to one another  
 Upon the blast.

Oh soft the streams drop music  
 Between the hills,  
 And musical the birds' nests  
 Beside those rills :  
 The nests are types of home  
 Love-hidden from ills,  
 The nests are types of spirits  
 Love-music fills.

So dream the sleepers,  
 Each man in his place ;  
 The lightning shows the smile  
 Upon each face :  
 The ship is driving,—driving,—  
 It drives apace :  
 And sleepers smile, and spirits  
 Bewail their case.

The lightning glares and reddens  
 Across the skies ;  
 It seems but sunset  
 To those sleeping eyes.  
 When did the sun go down  
 On such a wise ?  
 From such a sunset  
 When shall day arise ?

'Wake,' call the spirits :  
 But to heedless ears :  
 They have forgotten sorrows  
 And hopes and fears ;  
 They have forgotten perils  
 And smiles and tears ;  
 Their dream has held them long,  
 Long years and years.

'Wake,' call the spirits again :  
 But it would take  
 A louder summons  
 To bid them awake.  
 Some dream of pleasure  
 For another's sake :  
 Some dream, forgetful  
 Of a lifelong ache.

One by one slowly,  
 Ah how sad and slow !  
 Wailing and praying  
 The spirits rise and go :  
 Clear stainless spirits,  
 White, as white as snow ;  
 Pale spirits, wailing  
 For an overthrow.

One by one flitting,  
 Like a mournful bird  
 Whose song is tired at last  
 For no mate heard.  
 The loving voice is silent,  
 The useless word ;  
 One by one flitting  
 Sick with hope deferred.

Driving and driving,  
 The ship drives amain :  
 While swift from mast to mast  
 Shapes flit again,  
 Flit silent as the silence  
 Where men lie slain ;  
 Their shadow cast upon the sails  
 Is like a stain.

No voice to call the sleepers,  
 No hand to raise :  
 They sleep to death in dreaming  
 Of length of days.  
 Vanity of vanities,  
 The Preacher says :  
 Vanity is the end  
 Of all their ways.

17 October 1853.

### CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD

FLOWERS preach to us if we will  
 hear : —

The rose saith in the dewy morn :  
 'I am most fair ;  
 Yet all my loveliness is born  
 Upon a thorn.'  
 The poppy saith amid the corn :  
 'Let but my scarlet head appear  
 And I am held in scorn ;  
 Yet juice of subtle virtue lies  
 Within my cup of curious dyes.'  
 The lilies say : 'Behold how we  
 Preach without words of purity.'  
 The violets whisper from the shade  
 Which their own leaves have made :  
 'Men scent our fragrance on the  
 air,  
 Yet take no heed  
 Of humble lessons we would read.'

But not alone the fairest flowers :  
 The merest grass  
 Along the roadside where we pass,  
 Lichen and moss and sturdy weed,  
 Tell of His love who sends the  
 dew,  
 The rain and sunshine too,  
 To nourish one small seed.

21 October 1853.

### WHO HAVE A FORM OF GODLINESS

WHEN I am sick and tired it is  
 God's will :

Also God's will alone is sure and  
 best : —

So in my weariness I find my  
 rest,

And so in poverty I take my fill.

Therefore I see my good in midst  
 of ill,

Therefore in loneliness I build my  
 nest,

And through hot noon pant toward  
 the shady west,

And hope in sickening disappoint-  
 ment still.

So, when the times of restitution  
 come,

The sweet times of refreshing  
 come at last,

My God shall fill my longings  
 to the brim :

Therefore I wait and look and  
 long for Him :

Not wearied though the work is  
 wearisome,

Nor fainting though the time be  
 almost past.

18 December 1853.

### SOME FEASTS AND FASTS

(From 1853 to 1893.)

#### ADVENT SUNDAY

BEHOLD, the Bridegroom cometh :  
 go ye out

With lighted lamps and garlands  
 round about

To meet Him in a rapture with a  
 shout.

It may be at the midnight, black as  
pitch,  
Earth shall cast up her poor, cast  
up her rich.

It may be at the crowing of the  
cock  
Earth shall upheave her depth,  
uproot her rock.

For lo, the Bridegroom fetcheth  
home the Bride :  
His Hands are Hands she knows,  
she knows His Side.

Like pure Rebekah at the appointed  
place,  
Veiled, she unveils her face to meet  
His Face.

Like great Queen Esther in her  
triumphing,  
She triumphs in the Presence of her  
King.

His Eyes are as a Dove's, and she's  
Dove-eyed ;  
He knows His lovely mirror, sister,  
Bride.

He speaks with Dove-voice of ex-  
ceeding love,  
And she with love-voice of an  
answering Dove.

Behold, the Bridegroom cometh :  
go we out  
With lamps ablaze and garlands  
round about  
To meet Him in a rapture with a  
shout.

*Before 1886.*

## ADVENT.

EARTH grown old, yet still so green,  
Deep beneath her crust of  
cold

Nurses fire unfelt, unseen :  
Earth grown old.

We who live are quickly  
told :

Millions more lie hid between  
Inner swathings of her fold.

When will fire break up her screen ?  
When will life burst thro' her  
mould ?

Earth, earth, earth, thy cold is keen,  
Earth grown old.

*Before 1886.*

SOONER or later : yet at last  
The Jordan must be past ;

It may be he will overflow  
His banks the day we go ;

It may be that his cloven deep  
Will stand up on a heap.

Sooner or later : yet one day  
We all must pass that way ;

Each man, each woman, humbled,  
pale,  
Pass veiled within the veil ;

Child, parent, bride, companion,  
Alone, alone, alone.

For none a ransom can be paid,  
A suretyship be made :

I, bent by mine own burden, must  
Enter my house of dust ;

I, rated to the full amount,  
Must render mine account.

When earth and sea shall empty all  
Their graves of great and small ;

When earth wrapt in a fiery flood  
Shall no more hide her blood ;

When mysteries shall be revealed ;  
All secrets be unsealed ;

When things of night, when things  
of shame,  
Shall find at last a name,

Pealed for a hissing and a curse  
Throughout the universe :

Then, Awful Judge, most Awful God,  
Then cause to bud Thy rod,

To bloom with blossoms, and to give  
Almonds ; yea, bid us live.

I plead Thyself with Thee, I plead  
Thee in our utter need :

Jesus, most Merciful of Men,  
Show mercy on us then ;

Lord God of Mercy and of men,  
Show mercy on us then.

*Circa 1877.*

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

CHRISTMAS hath a darkness  
Brighter than the blazing noon,  
Christmas hath a chillness  
Warmer than the heat of June,  
Christmas hath a beauty  
Lovelier than the world can show :  
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,  
Brought for us so low.

Earth, strike up your music,  
Birds that sing and bells that ring ;  
Heaven hath answering music  
For all Angels soon to sing :  
Earth, put on your whitest  
Bridal robe of spotless snow :  
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,  
Brought for us so low.

*Before 1886.*

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

A BABY is a harmless thing  
And wins our hearts with one  
accord,  
And Flower of Babies was their  
King,  
Jesus Christ our Lord :  
Lily of lilies He  
Upon His Mother's knee ;  
Rose of roses, soon to be  
Crowned with thorns on leafless  
tree.

A lamb is innocent and mild  
And merry on the soft green sod ;  
And Jesus Christ, the Undeiled,  
Is the Lamb of God :  
Only spotless He  
Upon his Mother's knee ;  
White and ruddy, soon to be  
Sacrificed for you and me.

Nay, lamb is not so sweet a word,  
Nor lily half so pure a name ;  
Another name our hearts hath stirred,  
Kindling them to flame :  
'Jesus' certainly  
Is music and melody :  
Heart with heart in harmony  
Carol we and worship we.

*Before 1886.*

## CHRISTMASTIDE

LOVE came down at Christmas,  
 Love all lovely, Love Divine ;  
 Love was born at Christmas,  
 Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
 Love Incarnate, Love Divine ;  
 Worship we our Jesus :  
 But wherewith for sacred sign ?

Love shall be our token,  
 Love be yours and love be mine,  
 Love to God and all men,  
 Love for plea and gift and sign.  
*Before 1886.*

## ST. JOHN, APOSTLE

EARTH cannot bar flame from  
 ascending,  
 Hell cannot bind light from descend-  
 ing,  
 Death cannot finish life never ending.

Eagle and sun gaze at each other,  
 Eagle at sun, brother at Brother,  
 Loving in peace and joy one another.

O St. John, with chains for thy wages,  
 Strong thy rock where the storm-  
 blast rages,  
 Rock of refuge, the Rock of Ages.

Rome hath passed with her awful  
 voice,  
 Earth is passing with all her joys,  
 Heaven shall pass away with a noise.

So from us all follies that please us,  
 So from us all falsehoods that ease  
 us,—  
 Only all saints abide with their  
 Jesus.

Jesus, in love looking down hither,  
 Jesus, by love draw us up thither,  
 That we in Thee may abide to-  
 gether.

*Before 1893.*

‘BELOVED, let us love one another,’  
 says St. John,  
 Eagle of eagles calling from  
 above :

Words of strong nourishment for  
 life to feed upon,  
 ‘Beloved, let us love.’

Voice of an eagle, yea, Voice of  
 the Dove :  
 If we may love, winter is past and  
 gone ;  
 Publish we, praise we, for lo it is  
 enough.

More sunny than sunshine that ever  
 yet shone,  
 Sweetener of the bitter, smoother  
 of the rough,  
 Highest lesson of all lessons for all  
 to con,  
 ‘Beloved, let us love.’

*Before 1886.*

## HOLY INNOCENTS

THEY scarcely waked before they  
 slept,  
 They scarcely wept before they  
 laughed ;  
 They drank indeed death’s bitter  
 draught,  
 But all its bitterest dregs were  
 kept  
 And drained by Mothers while they  
 wept.

From Heaven the speechless Infants  
speak :

Weep not (they say), our Mothers  
dear,

For swords nor sorrows come  
not here.

Now we are strong who were so  
weak,

And all is ours we could not seek.

We bloom among the blooming  
flowers,

We sing among the singing  
birds ;

Wisdom we have who wanted  
words :

Here morning knows not evening  
hours,

All's rainbow here without the  
showers.

And softer than our Mother's breast,  
And closer than our Mother's  
arm,

Is here the Love that keeps us  
warm

And broods above our happy nest.

Dear Mothers, come : for Heaven  
is best.

*Circa 1877.*

UNSPOTTED lambs to follow the  
one Lamb,

Unspotted doves to wait on the  
one Dove ;

To whom Love saith, ' Be with Me  
where I am,'

And lo their answer unto Love is  
love.

For tho' I know not any note they  
know,

Nor know one word of all their  
song above,

I know Love speaks to them, and  
even so

I know the answer unto Love is  
love.

*Before 1893.*

#### EPIPHANY

' LORD Babe, if Thou art He  
We sought for patiently,

Where is Thy court ?

Hither may prophecy and star  
resort ;

Men heed not their report.'—

' Bow down and worship, righteous  
man :

This Infant of a span

Is He man sought for since the  
world began !'—

' Then, Lord, accept my gold, too  
base a thing

For Thee, of all kings King.'—

' Lord Babe, despite Thy youth

I hold Thee of a truth

Both Good and Great :

But wherefore dost Thou keep so  
mean a state,

Low-lying desolate ?'—

' Bow down and worship, righteous  
seer :

The Lord our God is here

Approachable, Who bids us all  
draw near.'—

' Wherefore to Thee I offer frank-  
incense,

Thou Sole Omnipotence.'—

' But I have only brought

Myrrh ; no wise afterthought

Instructed me

To gather pearls or gems, or choice  
to see

Coral or ivory.'—



'Not least thine offering proves  
thee wise :

For myrrh means sacrifice,  
And He that lives, this Same is  
He that dies.'—

'Then here is myrrh : alas, yea  
woe is me

That myrrh befitteth Thee.'—

Myrrh, frankincense, and gold :

And lo from wintry fold

Good-will doth bring

A Lamb, the innocent likeness of  
this King

Whom stars and seraphs sing :

And lo the bird of love, a Dove,  
Flutters and coos above :

And Dove and Lamb and Babe  
agree in love :—

Come all mankind, comé all creation  
hither,

Come, worship Christ together.

*Before 1886.*

#### EPIPHANYTIDE

TREMBLING before Thee we fall  
down to adore Thee,

Shamefaced and trembling we  
lift our eyes to Thee :

O First and with the last ! annul  
our ruined past,

Rebuild us to Thy glory, set us  
free

From sin and from sorrow to fall  
down and worship Thee.

Full of pity view us, stretch Thy  
sceptre to us,

Bid us live that we may give  
ourselves to Thee :

O faithful Lord and true ! stand  
up for us and do,

R

Make us lovely, make us new,  
set us free—

Heart and soul and spirit—to  
bring all and worship Thee.

*Before 1893.*

#### SEPTUAGESIMA

'So run that ye may obtain.'

ONE step more, and the race is ended ;

One word more, and the lesson's  
done ;

One toil more, and a long rest follows  
At set of sun.

Who would fail, for one step with-  
holden ?

Who would fail, for one word un-  
said ?

Who would fail, for a pause too early ?  
Sound sleep the dead.

One step more, and the goal receives  
us ;

One word more, and life's task is  
done ;

One toil more, and the Cross is  
carried

And sets the sun.

*Before 1886.*

#### SEXAGESIMA

'Cursed is the ground for thy sake.'

YET earth was very good in days of  
old,

And earth is lovely still :

Still for the sacred flock she spreads  
the fold,

For Sion rears the hill.

Mother she is and cradle of our race,

A depth where treasures lie,

The broad foundation of a holy place,

Man's step to scale the sky.

M

She spreads the harvest-field which  
 Angels reap,  
 And lo the crop is white ;  
 She spreads God's Acre where the  
 happy sleep  
 All night that is not night.

Earth may not pass till heaven shall  
 pass away,  
 Nor heaven may be renewed  
 Except with earth : and once more  
 in that day  
 Earth shall be very good.  
*Before 1893.*

THAT Eden of earth's sunrise cannot  
 vie  
 With Paradise beyond her sunset sky  
 Hidden on high.

Four rivers watered Eden in her  
 bliss,  
 But Paradise hath One which perfect  
 is  
 In sweetnesses.

Eden had gold, but Paradise hath  
 gold  
 Like unto glass of splendours mani-  
 fold  
 Tongue hath not told.

Eden had sun and moon to make  
 her bright ;  
 But Paradise hath God and Lamb  
 for light,  
 And hath no night.

Unspotted innocence was Eden's  
 best ;  
 Great Paradise shows God's fulfilled  
 behest,  
 Triumph and rest.

Hail, Eve and Adam, source of death  
 and shame !  
 New life has sprung from death, and  
 Jesu's Name  
 Clothes you with fame.

Hail Adam, and hail Eve ! your  
 children rise  
 And call you blessed, in their glad  
 surmise  
 Of Paradise.

*Before 1893.*

#### QUINQUAGESIMA

LOVE is alone the worthy law of love :  
 All other laws have presupposed  
 a taint :

Love is the law from kindled saint  
 to saint,  
 From lamb to lamb, from dove to  
 answering dove.

Love is the motive of all things that  
 move

Harmonious by free will without  
 constraint :

Love learns and teaches : love  
 shall man acquaint  
 With all he lacks, which all his lack  
 is love.

Because Love is the fountain, I  
 discern

The stream as love : for what but  
 love should flow

From fountain Love ? not bitter  
 from the sweet !

I ignorant, have I laid claim to  
 know ?

Oh teach me, Love, such know-  
 ledge as is meet

For one to know who is fain to love  
 and learn.

*Before 1893.*

PITEOUS my rhyme is  
 What while I muse of love and pain,  
 Of love mis-spent, of love in vain,  
 Of love that is not loved again :  
 And is this all then ?  
 As long as time is,  
 Love loveth. Time is but a span,  
 The dalliance space of dying man :  
 And is this all immortals can ?  
 The gain were small then.

Love loves for ever,  
 And finds a sort of joy in pain,  
 And gives with nought to take again,  
 And loves too well to end in vain :  
 Is the gain small then ?  
 Love laughs at 'never,'  
 Outlives our life, exceeds the span  
 Appointed to mere mortal man :  
 All which love is and does and can  
 Is all in all then.  
*Before 1886.*

## ASH WEDNESDAY

My God, my God, have mercy on  
 my sin,  
 For it is great ; and if I should begin  
 To tell it all, the day would be too  
 small  
 To tell it in.

My God, Thou wilt have mercy on  
 my sin  
 For Thy Love's sake : yea, if I should  
 begin  
 To tell This all, the day would be  
 too small  
 To tell it in.

*Before 1886.*

GOOD Lord, to-day  
 scarce find breath to say :

Scourge, but receive me.  
 For stripes are hard to bear, but  
 worse  
 Thy intolerable curse ;  
 So do not leave me.

Good Lord, lean down  
 In pity, tho' Thou frown ;  
 Smite, but retrieve me :  
 For so Thou hold me up to stand  
 And kiss Thy smiting hand,  
 It less will grieve me.

*Before 1893.*

## LENT

IT is good to be last not first,  
 Pending the present distress ;  
 It is good to hunger and thirst,  
 So it be for righteousness.  
 It is good to spend and be spent,  
 It is good to watch and to pray :  
 Life and Death make a goodly Lent  
 So it leads us to Easter Day.

*Before 1886.*

## EMBERTIDE

I SAW a Saint.—How canst thou  
 tell that he  
 Thou sawest was a Saint?—  
 I saw one like to Christ so lumin-  
 ously  
 By patient deeds of love, his  
 mortal taint  
 Seemed made his groundwork for  
 humility.

And when he marked me downcast  
 utterly

Where foul I sat and faint,  
 Then more than ever Christ-like  
 kindled he ;

And welcomed me as I had been  
 a saint,  
 Tenderly stooping low to comfort me.

Christ bade him, 'Do thou likewise.'  
Wherefore he

Waxed zealous to acquaint  
His soul with sin and sorrow, if so  
be

He might retrieve some latent  
saint :—

'Lo, I, with the child God hath  
given to me !'

*Before 1893.*

#### MID-LENT

Is any grieved or tired ? Yea, by  
God's Will :

Surely God's Will alone is good  
and best :

O weary man, in weariness take  
rest,

O hungry man, by hunger feast thy  
fill.

Discern thy good beneath a mask of  
ill,

Or build of loneliness thy secret  
nest :

At noon take heart, being mind-  
ful of the west ;

At night wake hope, for dawn ad-  
vances still.

At night wake hope. Poor soul, in  
such sore need

Of wakening and of girding up  
anew,

Hast thou that hope which faint-  
ing doth pursue ?

No saint but hath pursued and  
hath been faint ;

Bid love wake hope, for both thy  
steps shall speed,

Still faint yet still pursuing, O  
thou saint.

*Before 1886.*

#### PASSIONTIDE

IT is the greatness of Thy love, dear  
Lord, that we would celebrate  
With sevenfold powers.

Our love at best is cold and poor, at  
best unseemly for Thy state,

This best of ours.

Creatures that die, we yet are such  
as Thine own hands deigned  
to create :

We frail as flowers,

We bitter bondslaves ransomed at a  
price incomparably great  
To grace Heaven's bowers.

Thou callest : 'Come at once'—and  
still Thou callest us : 'Come  
late, tho' late'—

(The moments fly)—

'Come, every one that thirsteth,  
come—Come prove Me,  
knocking at My gate'—

(Some souls draw nigh !)—

'Come thou who waiting seekest  
Me—Come thou for whom  
I seek and wait'—

(Why will we die ?)—

'Come and repent : come and  
amend : come joy the joys  
unsatiate'—

—(Christ passeth by . . .)—

Lord, pass not by—I come—  
and I—and I. Amen.

*Before 1893.*

#### PALM SUNDAY

'He treadeth the winepress of the fierce-  
ness and wrath of Almighty God.'

I LIFT mine eyes, and see

Thee, tender Lord, in pain upon the  
tree,

Athirst for my sake and athirst for  
me.

'Yea, look upon Me there,  
Compass'd with thorns and bleeding  
everywhere,  
For thy sake bearing all, and glad  
to bear.'

I lift my heart to pray :  
Thou Who didst love me all that  
darkened day,  
Wilt Thou not love me to the end  
always ?

'Yea, thee My wandering sheep,  
Yea, thee My scarlet sinner slow to  
weep,  
Come to Me, I will love thee and  
will keep.'

'Yet am I racked with fear :  
Behold the unending outer darkness  
dear,  
Behold the gulf unbridgeable and  
near !

Nay, fix thy heart, thine eyes,  
Thy hope upon My boundless sacri-  
fice :  
Will I lose lightly one so dear-  
bought prize ?'

Ah Lord, it is not Thou,  
Thou that wilt fail ; yet woe is me,  
for how  
Shall I endure who half am failing  
now ?

'Nay, weld thy resolute will  
To Mine : glance not aside for good  
or ill :  
I love thee ; trust Me still and love  
Me still.'

Yet Thou Thyself hast said,  
When Thou shalt sift the living from  
the dead  
Some must depart shamed and un-  
comforted.

'Judge not before that day :  
Trust Me with all thy heart, even  
tho' I slay :  
Trust Me in love, trust on, love on,  
and pray.'

*Before 1893.*

#### MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

'The Voice of my Beloved.'

ONCE I ached for thy dear sake :  
Wilt thou cause Me now to ache ?  
Once I bled for thee in pain :  
Wilt thou rend My Heart again ?  
Crown of thorns and shameful tree,  
Bitter death I bore for thee,  
Bore My Cross to carry thee,  
And wilt thou have nought of Me ?

1853.

#### TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

By Thy long-drawn anguish to atone,  
Jesus Christ, show mercy on Thine  
own :

Jesus Christ, show mercy and atone  
Not for other sake except Thine own.

Thou Who thirsting on the Cross  
didst see

All mankind and all I love and me,  
Still from Heaven look down in love  
and see

All mankind and all I love and me.

*Before 1886.*

## WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

MAN'S life is death. Yet Christ  
endured to live,  
Preaching and teaching, toiling  
to and fro,  
Few men accepting what He yearned  
to give,  
Few men with eyes to know  
His Face, that Face of Love He  
stooped to show.

Man's death is life. For Christ  
endured to die  
In slow unuttered weariness of  
pain,  
A curse and an astonishment, passed  
by,  
Pointed at, mocked again  
By men for whom He shed His  
Blood—in vain?

*Before 1886.*

## MAUNDY THURSDAY

'And the Vine said . . . Should I leave  
my wine which cheereth God and  
man, and go to be promoted over the  
trees?'

THE great Vine left its glory to  
reign as Forest King.

'Nay,' quoth the lofty forest trees,  
'we will not have this thing;

We will not have this supple one  
enring us with its ring.

Lo from immemorial time our might  
towers shadowing:

Not we were born to curve and  
droop, not we to climb and  
cling:

We buffet back the buffeting wind,  
tough to its buffeting:

We screen great beasts, the wild  
fowl build in our heads and  
sing,

Every bird of every feather from off  
our tops takes wing:

I a king, and thou a king, and what  
king shall be our king?'

Nevertheless the great Vine stooped  
to be the Forest King,

While the forest swayed and mur-  
mured like seas that are tem-  
pesting:

Stooped and drooped with thousand  
tendrils in thirsty languishing;  
Bowed to earth and lay on earth for  
earth's replenishing;

Put off sweetness, tasted bitterness,  
endured time's fashioning;

Put off life and put on death:—and  
lo it was all to bring

All its fellows down to a death  
which hath lost the sting,

All its fellows up to a life in endless  
triumphing,—

I a king, and thou a king, and this  
King to be our King.

*Before 1886.*

## GOOD FRIDAY MORNING

'Bearing His Cross.'

UP Thy Hill of Sorrows

Thou all alone,  
Jesus, man's Redeemer,  
Climbing to a Throne:

Thro' the world triumphant,

Thro' the Church in pain,  
Which think to look upon Thee  
No more again.

Upon my hill of sorrows

I, Lord, with Thee,  
Cheered, upheld, yea carried  
If a need should be:



Cheered, upheld, yea carried,  
 Never left alone,  
 Carried in Thy heart of hearts  
 To a throne.

1893.

#### GOOD FRIDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, grown faint upon  
 the Cross,

A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy  
 look,

The unutterable craving for my  
 soul ;

Thy love of me sufficed  
 To load upon Thee and make good  
 my loss

In face of darkened heaven and  
 earth that shook :—

In face of earth and heaven,  
 take Thou my whole  
 Heart, O Lord Jesus Christ.

*Before 1886.*

#### GOOD FRIDAY EVENING

'Bring forth the Spear.'

NO Cherub's heart or hand for us  
 might ache,

No Seraph's heart of fire had half  
 sufficed :

Thine own were pierced and broken  
 for our sake,  
 O Jesus Christ.

Therefore we love Thee with our  
 faint good-will,

We crave to love Thee not as  
 heretofore,

To love Thee much, to love Thee  
 more, and still

More and yet more.

*Before 1893.*

'A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved  
 unto me.'

THY Cross cruciferous doth flower  
 in all

And every cross, dear Lord,  
 assigned to us :

Ours lowly-statured crosses ; Thine  
 how tall,

Thy Cross cruciferous.

Thy Cross alone life-giving,  
 glorious :

For love of Thine, souls love their  
 own when small,

Easy and light, or great and  
 ponderous.

Since deep calls deep, Lord, hearken  
 when we call ;

When cross calls Cross racking  
 and emulous :—

Remember us with him who shared  
 Thy gall,

Thy Cross cruciferous.

*Before 1893.*

#### EASTER EVEN

THE tempest over and gone, the  
 calm begun,

Lo, 'it is finished' and the Strong  
 Man sleeps :

All stars keep vigil watching for the  
 sun,

The moon her vigil keeps.

A garden full of silence and of  
 dew

Beside a virgin cave and entrance  
 stone :

Surely a garden full of Angels  
 too,

Wondering, on watch, alone.

They who cry 'Holy, Holy, Holy,'  
still

Veiling their faces round God's  
Throne above,

May well keep vigil on this heavenly  
hill

And cry their cry of love,

Adoring God in His new mystery  
Of Love more deep than hell,  
more strong than death ;

Until the day break and the shadows  
flee,

The Shaking and the Breath.

*Before 1886.*

(Our Church Palms are budding willow  
twigs.)

WHILE Christ lay dead the widowed  
world

Wore willow green for hope un-  
done :

Till, when bright Easter dew im-  
pearled

The chilly burial earth,

All north and south, all east and  
west,

Flushed rosy in the arising sun ;  
Hope laughed, and Faith resumed  
her rest,

And Love remembered mirth.

*Before 1893.*

#### EASTER DAY

WORDS cannot utter

Christ His returning :

Mankind, keep jubilee,

Strip off your mourning,

Crown you with garlands,

Set your lamps burning.

Speech is left speechless ;

Set you to singing,

Fling your hearts open wide,

- Set your bells ringing :

Christ the Chief Reaper

Comes, His sheaf bringing.

Earth wakes her song-birds,

Puts on her flowers,

Leads out her lambkins,

Builds up her bowers :

This is man's spousal day,

Christ's day and ours.

*Before 1886.*

#### EASTER MONDAY

OUT in the rain a world is growing  
green,

On half the trees quick buds are  
seen

Where glued-up buds have  
been.

Out in the rain God's Acre stretches  
green,

Its harvest quick tho' still unseen :  
For there the Life hath been.

If Christ hath died His brethren  
well may die,

Sing in the gate of death, lay by  
This life without a sigh :

For Christ hath died and good it is  
to die ;

To sleep when so He lays us by,  
Then wake without a sigh.

Yea, Christ hath died, yea, Christ is  
risen again :

Wherefore both life and death  
grow plain

To us who wax and wane ;

For Christ Who rose shall die no  
more again :

Amen : till He makes all things  
plain

Let us wax on and wane.

*Before 1886.*

#### EASTER TUESDAY

'TOGETHER with my dead body  
shall they arise.'

Shall my dead body arise ? then  
amen and yea

On track of a home beyond the  
uttermost skies

Together with my dead body  
shall they.

We know the way : thank God Who  
hath showed us the way !

Jesus Christ our Way to beautiful  
Paradise,

Jesus Christ the Same for ever, the  
Same to-day.

Five Virgins replenish with oil their  
lamps, being wise,

Five Virgins awaiting the Bride-  
groom watch and pray :

And if I one day spring from my  
grave to the prize,

Together with my dead body  
shall they.

*Before 1893.*

#### ROGATIONTIDE

WHO scatters tares shall reap no  
wheat,

But go hungry while others eat.

Who sows the wind shall not reap  
grain ;

The sown wind whirleth back again.

What God opens must open be,  
Tho' man pile the sand of the sea.

What God shuts is opened no more,  
Tho' man weary himself to find the  
door.

*Before 1886.*

#### ASCENSION EVE

O LORD Almighty Who hast formed  
us weak,

With us whom Thou hast formed  
deal fatherly ;

Be found of us whom Thou hast  
deigned to seek,

Be found that we the more may  
seek for Thee ;

Lord, speak and grant us ears to  
hear Thee speak ;

Lord, come to us and grant us  
eyes to see ;

Lord, make us meek, for Thou  
Thyself art meek ;

Lord, Thou art Love, fill us with  
charity.

O Thou the Life of living and of  
dead,

Who givest more the more Thy-  
self hast given,

Suffice us as Thy saints Thou  
hast sufficed ;

That beautified, replenished, com-  
forted,

Still gazing off from earth and up  
at heaven,

We may pursue Thy steps,  
Lord Jesus Christ.

*Before 1893.*

## ASCENSION DAY

'A Cloud received Him out of their sight.'

WHEN Christ went up to Heaven  
the Apostles stayed  
Gazing at Heaven with souls and  
wills on fire,  
Their hearts on flight along the  
track He made,  
Winged by desire.

Their silence spake: 'Lord, why  
not follow Thee?  
Home is not home without Thy  
Blessed Face,  
Life is not life. Remember, Lord,  
and see,  
Look back, embrace.

'Earth is one desert waste of  
banishment,  
Life is one long-drawn anguish of  
decay.  
Where Thou wert wont to go we  
also went:  
Why not to-day?'

Nevertheless a cloud cut off their  
gaze:  
They tarry to build up Jerusalem,  
Watching for Him, while thro' the  
appointed days  
He watches them.

They do His Will, and doing it  
rejoice,  
Patiently glad to spend and to be  
spent:  
Still He speaks to them, still they  
hear His Voice  
And are content.

For as a cloud received Him from  
their sight,  
So with a cloud will He return  
ere long:

Therefore they stand on guard by  
day, by night,  
Strenuous and strong.

They do, they dare, they beyond  
seven times seven  
Forgive, they cry God's mighty  
word aloud:  
Yet sometimes haply lift tired eyes  
to Heaven—  
'Is that His cloud?'

*Before 1886.*

## WHITSUN EVE

'As many as I love.'—Ah Lord,  
Who lovest all,  
If thus it is with Thee why sit  
remote above,  
Beholding from afar, stumbling and  
marred and small,  
So many Thou dost love?

Whom sin and sorrow make their  
worn reluctant thrall;  
Who fain would flee away but  
lack the wings of dove;  
Who long for love and rest; who  
look to Thee, and call  
To Thee for rest and love.

*Before 1893.*

## WHITSUN DAY

'When the Day of Pentecost was  
fully come.'

AT sound as of rushing wind, and  
sight as of fire,  
Lo flesh and blood made spirit  
and fiery flame,

Ambassadors in Christ's and the  
 Father's Name,  
 To woo back a world's desire.

These men chose death for their life  
 and shame for their boast,  
 For fear courage, for doubt in-  
 tuition of faith,  
 Chose love that is strong as death  
 and stronger than death  
 In the power of the Holy Ghost.

*Before 1886.*

#### WHITSUN MONDAY

'A pure River of Water of Life.'

WE know not a voice of that River,  
 If vocal or silent it be,  
 Where for ever and ever and ever  
 It flows to no sea.

More deep than the seas is that River,  
 More full than their manifold tides,  
 Where for ever and ever and ever  
 It flows and abides.

Pure gold is the bed of that River  
 (The gold of that land is the best),  
 Where for ever and ever and ever  
 It flows on at rest.

Oh goodly the banks of that River,  
 Oh goodly the fruits that they bear,  
 Where for ever and ever and ever  
 It flows and is fair.

For lo on each bank of that River  
 The Tree of Life life-giving grows,  
 Where for ever and ever and ever  
 The Pure River flows.

*Before 1893.*

#### WHITSUN TUESDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, our Wisdom and  
 our Rest,  
 Who wisely dost reveal and wisely  
 hide,  
 Grant us such grace in wisdom to  
 abide

According to Thy Will whose Will  
 is best.

Contented with Thine uttermost be-  
 hest,

Too sweet for envy and too high  
 for pride ;

All simple-souled, dove-hearted  
 and dove-eyed,

Soft-voiced, and satisfied in humble  
 nest.

Wondering at the bounty of Thy  
 Love

Which gives us wings of silver  
 and of gold ;

Wings folded close, yet ready to  
 unfold

When Thou shalt say, 'Winter  
 is past and gone :'

When Thou shalt say, 'Spouse,  
 sister, love and dove,

Come hither, sit with Me upon  
 My Throne.'

*Before 1886.*

#### TRINITY SUNDAY

My God, Thyself being Love Thy  
 heart is love,

And love Thy Will and love Thy  
 Word to us,

Whether Thou show us depths  
 calamitous

Or heights and flights of rapturous  
 peace above.

O Christ the Lamb, O Holy Ghost  
the Dove,  
Reveal the Almighty Father unto  
us ;

That we may tread Thy courts  
felicitous,  
Loving Who loves us, for our God  
is Love.

Lo, if our God be Love thro' heaven's  
long day,

Love is He thro' our mortal  
pilgrimage,

Love was He thro' all aeons  
that are told.

We change, but Thou remainest ;  
for Thine age

Is, Was, and Is to come, nor  
new nor old ;

We change, but Thou remainest ;  
yea and yea !

*Before 1893.*

#### CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

O BLESSED Paul elect to grace,  
Arise and wash away thy sin,  
Anoint thy head and wash thy face,  
Thy gracious course begin.

To start thee on thy outrunning race  
Christ shows the splendour of His  
Face :

What will that Face of splendour be  
When at the goal He welcomes thee?

*Before 1886.*

IN weariness and painfulness St.  
Paul

Served God and pleased Him :  
after-saints no less

Can wait on and can please Him,  
one and all

In weariness and painfulness,

By faith and hope triumphant  
thro' distress :

Not with the rankling service of a  
thrall ;

But even as loving children trust  
and bless,

Weep and rejoice, answering their  
Father's call,

Work with tired hands, and for-  
ward upward press

On sore tired feet still rising when  
they fall,

In weariness and painfulness.

*Before 1886.*

#### VIGIL OF THE PRESENTATION

LONG and dark the nights, dim and  
short the days,

Mounting weary heights on our  
weary ways,

Thee our God we praise.

Scaling heavenly heights by un-  
earthly ways,

Thee our God we praise all our  
nights and days,

Thee our God we praise.

*Before 1893.*

#### FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION

O FIRSTFRUITS of our grain,  
Infant and Lamb appointed to be  
slain,

A Virgin and two doves were all  
Thy train,

With one old man for state,

When Thou didst enter first Thy  
Father's gate.

Since then Thy train hath been  
Freeman and bondman, bishop, king  
and queen,



With flaming candles and with gar-  
lands green :  
Oh happy all who wait  
One day or thousand days around  
Thy gate !

And these have offered Thee,  
Beside their hearts, great stores for  
charity,  
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh ; if  
such may be  
For savour or for state  
Within the threshold of Thy golden  
gate.

Then snowdrops and my heart  
I'll bring, to find those blacker than  
Thou art :  
Yet, loving Lord, accept us in good  
part ;  
And give me grace to wait,  
A bruised reed bowed low before  
Thy gate.

*Circa 1877.*

#### THE PURIFICATION OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURITY born of a Maid :  
Was such a Virgin defiled ?  
Nay, by no shade of a shade.  
She offered her gift of pure love,  
A dove with a fair fellow-dove.  
She offered her Innocent Child  
The Essence and Author of Love ;  
The Lamb that indwelt by the  
Dove  
Was spotless and holy and mild ;  
More pure than all other,  
More pure than His Mother,  
Her God and Redeemer and Child.

*Before 1886.*

#### VIGIL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

ALL weareth, all wasteth,  
All flitteth, all hasteth,  
All of flesh and time :—  
Sound, sweet heavenly chime,  
Ring in the unutterable eternal  
prime.

Man hopeth, man feareth,  
Man droopeth :—Christ cheereth,  
Compassing release,  
Comforting with peace,  
Promising rest where strife and  
anguish cease.

Saints waking, saints sleeping,  
Rest well in safe keeping ;  
Well they rest to-day  
While they watch and pray,—  
But their to-morrow's rest what  
tongue shall say ?

*Before 1893.*

#### FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

WHERE TO shall we liken this Blessed  
Mary Virgin,  
Fruitful shoot from Jesse's root  
graciously emerging ?  
Lily we might call her, but Christ  
alone is white ;  
Rose delicious, but that Jesus is the  
one Delight ;  
Flower of women, but her Firstborn  
is mankind's one flower :  
He the Sun lights up all moons thro'  
their radiant hour.  
'Blessed among women, highly  
favoured,' thus  
Glorious Gabriel hailed her, teaching  
words to us :

Whom devoutly copying we too cry  
 'All hail!'

Echoing on the music of glorious  
 Gabriel.

*Before 1886.*

HERSELF a rose, who bore the Rose,  
 She bore the Rose and felt its  
 thorn.

All Loveliness new-born  
 Took on her bosom its repose,  
 And slept and woke there night  
 and morn.

Lily herself, she bore the one  
 Fair Lily; sweeter, whiter, far  
 Than she or others are:

The Sun of Righteousness her Son,  
 She was His morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace,  
 He was the Fountain, she the rill:  
 Her goodness to fulfil

And gladness, with proportioned pace  
 He led her steps thro' good and  
 ill.

Christ's mirror she of grace and love,  
 Of beauty and of life and death:  
 By hope and love and faith

Transfigured to His Likeness, 'Dove,  
 Spouse, Sister, Mother,' Jesus  
 saith.

*Circa 1877.*

#### ST. MARK

ONCE like a broken bow Mark  
 sprang aside:

Yet grace recalled him to a worthier  
 course,

To feeble hands and knees increas-  
 ing force,

Till God was magnified.

And now a strong Evangelist, St.  
 Mark

Hath for his sign a Lion in his  
 strength;

And thro' the stormy water's breadth  
 and length

He helps to steer God's Ark.

Thus calls he sinners to be peni-  
 tents,

He kindles penitents to high desire,  
 He mounts before them to the sphere  
 of saints,

And bids them come up higher.

*Circa 1877.*

#### ST. BARNABAS

'Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we  
 left it on the left hand.'—*Acts* xxi. 3.

'We sailed under Cyprus, because the  
 winds were contrary.'—*Acts* xxvii. 4.

ST. BARNABAS, with John his sister's  
 son,

Set sail for Cyprus; leaving in  
 their wake

That Chosen Vessel who for Jesus'  
 sake

Proclaimed the Gentiles and the  
 Jews at one.

Divided while united, each must run  
 His mighty course not hell should  
 overtake;

And pressing toward the mark  
 must own the ache

Of love, and sigh for heaven not yet  
 begun.

For saints in life-long exile yearn to  
 touch

Warm human hands, and com-  
 mune face to face;

But these we know not ever  
 met again:

Yet once St. Paul at distance over-  
much  
Just sighted Cyprus ; and once  
more in vain  
Neared it and passed ;—not there  
his landing-place.

*Circa 1877.*

#### VIGIL OF ST. PETER

O JESU, gone so far apart  
Only my heart can follow Thee,  
That look which pierced St. Peter's  
heart  
Turn now on me.

Thou who dost search me thro' and  
thro'  
And mark the crooked ways I  
went,  
Look on me, Lord, and make me too  
Thy penitent.

*Before 1893.*

#### ST. PETER

'LAUNCH out into the deep,' Christ  
spake of old  
To Peter : and he launched into  
the deep ;  
Strengthened should tempest wake  
which lay asleep,  
Strengthened to suffer heat or suffer  
cold.  
Thus, in Christ's Prescience : patient  
to behold  
A fall, a rise, a scaling Heaven's  
high steep ;  
Prescience of Love, which deigned  
to overleap  
The mire of human errors manifold.

Lord, Lover of Thy Peter, and of him  
Beloved with craving of a humbled  
heart  
Which eighteen hundred years  
have satisfied ;  
Hath he his throne among Thy  
Seraphim  
Who love ? or sits he on a throne  
apart,  
Unique, near Thee, to love Thee  
human-eyed ?

*Before 1893.*

ST. PETER once : ' Lord, dost Thou  
wash my feet ? '—

Much more I say : Lord, dost Thou  
stand and knock  
At my closed heart more rugged  
than a rock,  
Bolted and barred, for Thy soft touch  
unmeet,  
Nor garnished nor in any wise made  
sweet ?

Owls roost within and dancing  
satyrs mock.

Lord, I have heard the crowing of  
the cock

And have not wept : ah, Lord, Thou  
knowest it.

Yet still I hear Thee knocking, still  
I hear :

' Open to Me, look on Me eye to  
eye,

That I may wring thy heart and  
make it whole ;

And teach thee love because I hold  
thee dear,

And sup with thee in gladness  
soul with soul,

And sup with thee in glory by  
and by.'

*Before 1893.*

I FOLLOWED Thee, my God, I  
 followed Thee  
 To see the end :  
 I turned back flying from Gethse-  
 mane,  
 Turned back on flying steps to see  
 Thy Face, my God, my Friend.

Even fleeing from Thee my heart  
 clave to Thee :  
 I turned perforce  
 Constrained, yea chained by love  
 which maketh free ;  
 I turned perforce, and silently  
 Followed along Thy course.

Lord, didst Thou know that I was  
 following Thee ?  
 I weak and small  
 Yet Thy true lover, mean tho' I must  
 be,  
 Sinning and sorrowing—didst Thou  
 see ?  
 O Lord, Thou sawest all.

I thought I had been strong to die  
 for Thee ;  
 I disbelieved  
 Thy word of warning spoken  
 patiently :  
 My heart cried, 'That be far from  
 me,'  
 Till Thy bruised heart I grieved.

Once I had urged : 'Lord, this be  
 far from Thee' :—  
 Rebel to light,  
 It needed first that Thou shouldst  
 die for me  
 Or ever I could plumb and see  
 Love's lovely depth and height.

Alas that I should trust myself, not  
 Thee ;

Not trust Thy word :  
 I faithless slumberer in Gethsemane,  
 Blinded and rash ; who instantly  
 Put trust, but in a sword.

Ah Lord, if even at the last in Thee  
 I had put faith,  
 I might even at the last have coun-  
 selled me,  
 And not have heaped up cruelty  
 To sting Thee in Thy death.

Alas for me, who bore to think on  
 Thee  
 And yet to lie !  
 While Thou, O Lord, didst bear to  
 look on me  
 Goaded by fear to blasphemy,  
 And break my heart and die.

No balm I find in Gilead, yet in Thee  
 Nailed to Thy palm  
 I find a balm that wrings and com-  
 forts me :  
 Balm wrung from Thee by agony,  
 My balm, mine only balm.

Oh blessed John who standeth close  
 to Thee,  
 With Magdalene,  
 And Thine own Mother praying  
 silently,  
 Yea, blessed above women she,  
 Now blessed even as then.

And blessed the scorned thief who  
 hangs by Thee,  
 Whose thirsting mouth  
 Thirsts for Thee more than water,  
 whose eyes see,  
 Whose lips confess in ecstasy  
 Nor feel their parching drouth.

Like as the hart the water-brooks I  
 Thee  
 Desire, my hands  
 I stretch to Thee ; O kind Lord,  
 pity me :  
 Lord, I have wept, wept bitterly,  
 I driest of dry lands.

Lord, I am standing far far off from  
 Thee ;  
 Yet is my heart  
 Hanging with Thee upon the ac-  
 cursed tree ;  
 The nails, the thorns, pierce Thee  
 and me :  
 My God, I claim my part—

Scarce in Thy throne and kingdom ;  
 yet with Thee  
 In shame, in loss,  
 In Thy forsaking, in Thine agony :  
 Love crucified, behold even me,  
 Me also bear Thy cross.  
*Circa 1877.*

## VIGIL OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

LORD, to Thine own grant watchful  
 hearts and eyes ;  
 Hearts strung to prayer, awake  
 while eyelids sleep ;  
 Eyes patient till the end to watch  
 and weep.  
 So will sleep nourish power to wake  
 and rise  
 With Virgins who keep vigil and  
 are wise,  
 To sow among all sowers who  
 shall reap,  
 From out man's deep to call Thy  
 vaster deep,  
 And tread the uphill track to  
 Paradise.

R

Sweet souls ! so patient that they  
 make no moan,  
 So calm on journey that they  
 seem at rest,  
 So rapt in prayer that half they  
 dwell in heaven,  
 Thankful for all withheld and  
 all things given ;  
 So lit by love that Christ shines  
 manifest  
 Transfiguring their aspects to His  
 own.

*Before 1893.*

## ST. BARTHOLOMEW

HE bore an agony whereof the  
 name  
 Hath turned his fellows pale :  
 But what if God should call us to  
 the same,  
 Should call, and we should fail ?

Nor earth nor sea could swallow up  
 our shame,  
 Nor darkness draw a veil :  
 For he endured that agony whose  
 name  
 Hath made his fellows quail.  
*Before 1886.*

## ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

'Ye that excel in strength.'

SERVICE and strength, God's Angels  
 and Archangels ;  
 His Seraphs fires, and lamps His  
 Cherubim :  
 Glory to God from highest and from  
 lowest,  
 Glory to God in everlasting hymn  
 From all His creatures.

N

Princes that serve, and Powers that  
work His pleasure,  
Heights that soar to'ard Him,  
Depths that sink to'ard Him;  
Flames fire out-flaming, chill beside  
His Essence;  
Insight all-probing, save where  
scant and dim  
To'ard its Creator.

Sacred and free exultant in God's  
pleasure,  
His Will their solace, thus they  
wait on Him;  
And shout their shout of ecstasy  
eternal,  
And trim their splendours that  
they burn not dim  
To'ard their Creator.

Wherefore with Angels, wherefore  
with Archangels,  
With lofty Cherubs, loftier Sera-  
phim,  
We laud and magnify our God  
Almighty,  
And veil our faces rendering love  
to Him  
With all His creatures.

*Circa 1877.*

#### VIGIL OF ALL SAINTS

Up, my drowsing eyes!  
Up, my sinking heart!  
Up to Jesus Christ arise!  
Claim your part  
In all raptures of the skies.  
Yet a little while,  
Yet a little way,  
Saints shall reap and rest and smile  
All the day.  
Up! let's trudge another mile.

*Before 1886.*

#### ALL SAINTS

As grains of sand, as stars, as drops  
of dew,  
Numbered and treasured by the  
Almighty Hand,  
The Saints triumphant throng  
that holy land  
Where all things and Jerusalem are  
new.

We know not half they sing or half  
they do,  
But this we know, they rest and  
understand;

While like a conflagration freshly  
fanned  
Their love glows upward, outward,  
thro' and thro'.

Lo like a stream of incense  
launched on flame

Fresh Saints stream up from  
death to life above,

To shine among those others  
and rejoice:

What matters tribulation whence  
they came?

All love and only love can find  
a voice

Where God makes glad His  
Saints, for God is Love.

*Before 1886.*

#### ALL SAINTS: MARTYRS

ONCE slain for Him who first was  
slain for them,

Now made alive in Him for ever-  
more,

All luminous and lovely in their  
gore,

With no more buffeting winds or  
tides to stem,

The Martyrs look for New Jerusalem;



And cry 'How long?' remembering  
all they bore,  
'How long?' with heart and eyes  
sent on before

Toward consummated throne and  
diadem.

'How long?' White robes are  
given to their desire;

'How long?' deep rest that, is  
and is to be;

With a great promise of the  
oncoming host,

Loves to their love and fires to flank  
their fire:

So rest they, worshipping in-  
cessantly

One God, the Father, Son, and  
Holy Ghost.

*Before 1893.*

'I gave a sweet smell.'

SAINTS are like roses when they  
flush rarest,

Saints are like lilies when they  
bloom fairest,

Saints are like violets sweetest of  
their kind:

Bear in mind

This to-day. Then to-  
morrow:

All like roses rarer than the rarest,

All like lilies fairer than the fairest,

All like violets sweeter than we  
know,

Be it so.

To-morrow blots out sorrow.

*Before 1886.*

HARK! the Alleluias of the great  
salvation,

Still beginning, never ending,  
still begin,

The thunder of an endless adoration:

Open ye the gates, that the righteous  
nation

Which have kept the truth may  
enter in.

Roll ye back, ye pearls, on your  
twelfold station:

No more deaths to die, no more  
fights to win!

Lift your heads, ye gates, that the  
righteous nation,

Led by the Great Captain of their  
sole salvation,

Having kept the truth, may enter  
in.

*Before 1893.*

#### A SONG FOR THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS

LOVE is the key of life and death,

Of hidden heavenly mystery:

Of all Christ is, of all He saith,

Love is the key.

As three times to His Saint He saith,

He saith to me, He saith to thee,

Breathing His Grace-conferring

Breath:

'Lovest thou Me?'

Ah, Lord, I have such feeble faith,

Such feeble hope to comfort me:

But love it is, is strong as death,

And I love Thee.

*Before 1893.*

#### SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

THE end of all things is at hand.

We all

Stand in the balance trembling  
as we stand;

Or if not trembling, tottering to a fall.

The end of all things is at hand.

O hearts of men, covet the un-  
ending land !  
O hearts of men, covet the musical,  
Sweet, never-ending waters of  
that strand !

While Earth shows poor, a slippery  
rolling ball,  
And Hell looms vast, a gulf un-  
plumbed, unspanned,  
And Heaven flings wide its gates to  
great and small,  
The end of all things is at hand.  
*Before 1893.*

### THERE REMAINETH THERE- FORE A REST

IN the grave will be no space  
For the purple of the proud—  
They must mingle with the crowd :  
In the wrappings of a shroud  
Jewels would be out of place.

There no laughter shall be heard,  
Nor the heavy sound of sighs :  
Sleep shall seal the aching eyes :  
All the ancient and the wise  
There shall utter not a word.

Yet it may be we shall hear  
How the mounting skylark sings  
And the bell for matins rings ;  
Or perhaps the whisperings  
Of white Angels sweet and clear.

What a calm when all is done,  
Wearing vigil, prayer, and fast !  
All fulfilled from first to last :  
All the length of time gone past  
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod  
Urge us on the narrow way :  
Bear we still as best we may  
Heat and burden of the day,  
Struggling, panting up to God.

*17 February 1854.*

### PARADISE

ONCE in a dream I saw the flowers  
That bud and bloom in Paradise ;  
More fair they are than waking  
eyes  
Have seen in all this world of ours.  
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,  
And faint the lily on its stem,  
And faint the perfect violet,  
Compared with them.

I heard the songs of Paradise :  
Each bird sat singing in his place ;  
A tender song so full of grace  
It soared like incense to the skies.  
Each bird sat singing to his mate  
Soft cooing notes among the trees :  
The nightingale herself were cold  
To such as these.

I saw the fourfold River flow,  
And deep it was, with golden sand ;  
It flowed between a mossy land  
With murmured music grave and low.  
It hath refreshment for all thirst,  
For fainting spirits strength and  
rest ;  
Earth holds not such a draught as  
this  
From east to west.

The Tree of Life stood budding  
there,  
Abundant with its twelvefold  
fruits ;  
Eternal sap sustains its roots,  
Its shadowing branches fill the air.

- Its leaves are healing for the world,  
Its fruit the hungry world can  
feed,  
Sweeter than honey to the taste  
And balm indeed.

I saw the Gate called Beautiful ;  
And looked, but scarce could look  
within ;

I saw the golden streets begin,  
And outskirts of the glassy pool.  
Oh harps, oh crowns of plenteous  
stars,

Oh green palm branches many-  
leaved—

Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath  
heard,  
Nor heart conceived.

I hope to see these things again,  
But not as once in dreams by  
night ;

To see them with my very sight,  
And touch and handle and attain :  
To have all heaven beneath my feet  
For narrow way that once they  
trod ;

To have my part with all the saints,  
And with my God.

28 February 1854.

YE HAVE FORGOTTEN THE  
EXHORTATION

ANGEL

BURY thy dead, dear friend,  
Between the night and day :  
Where depths of summer shade  
are cool,  
And murmurs of a summer pool  
And windy murmurs stray :—

SOUL

Ah gone away,  
Ah dear and lost delight,  
Gone from me and for ever out of  
sight !

ANGEL

Bury thy dead, dear love,  
And make his bed most fair above :  
The latest buds shall still  
Blow there, and the first violets  
too,  
And there a turtle-dove  
Shall brood and coo :—

SOUL

I cannot make the nest  
So warm but he may find it  
chill  
In solitary rest.

ANGEL

Bury thy dead heart-deep :  
Take patience till the sun be  
set :  
There are no tears for him to  
weep,  
No doubts to haunt him yet :  
Take comfort, he will not  
forget :—

SOUL

Then I will watch beside his  
sleep :  
Will watch alone,  
And make my moan  
Because the harvest is so long to  
reap.

ANGEL

The fields are white to harvest, look  
and see,  
Are white abundantly.

The harvest-moon shines full  
and clear,  
The harvest-time is near,  
Be of good cheer :—

## SOUL

Ah woe is me !  
I have no heart for harvest-  
time,  
Grown sick with hope deferred from  
chime to chime.

## ANGEL

But One can give thee heart, thy  
Lord and his,  
Can raise both thee and  
him  
To shine with Seraphim,  
And pasture where the eternal  
fountain is ;  
Can give thee of that tree  
Whose leaves are health for  
thee ;  
Can give thee robes made clean  
and white,  
And love, and all delight,  
And beauty where the day turns not  
to night.  
Who knocketh at His door,  
And presseth in, goes out no  
more.  
Kneel as thou hast not knelt  
before—  
The time is short — and  
smite  
Upon thy breast and pray with all  
thy might :—

## SOUL

O Lord, my heart is broken for my  
sin :  
Yet hasten Thine own day  
And come away.

Is not time full ? Oh put the sickle  
in,  
O Lord, begin !  
10 May 1854.

## THE WORLD

By day she woos me, soft, exceed-  
ing fair :  
But all night as the moon so  
changeth she ;  
Loathsome and foul with hideous  
leprosy,  
And subtle serpents gliding in her  
hair.  
By day she woos me to the outer  
air,  
Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and  
full satiety :  
But thro' the night a beast she  
grins at me,  
A very monster void of love and  
prayer.  
By day she stands a lie : by night  
she stands  
In all the naked horror of the  
truth,  
With pushing horns and clawed and  
clutching hands.  
Is this a friend indeed, that I should  
sell  
My soul to her, give her my life  
and youth,  
Till my feet, cloven too, take hold  
on hell ?  
27 June 1854.

## UNFORGOTTEN

O UNFORGOTTEN !  
How long ago ? one spirit saith.  
As long as life even unto death,  
The passage of a poor frail breath.

O unforgotten !

An unforgotten load of love,  
A load of grief all griefs above,  
A blank blank nest without its dove.

As long as time is :—

No longer? Time is but a span,  
The dalliance-space of empty man :  
And is this all immortals can ?

Ever and ever,

Beyond all time, beyond all space :  
*Now* shadows darkening heart and  
face ;

*Then* glory in a glorious place.

Sad heart and spirit,

Bowed now, yea broken, for a while—  
Lagging and toiling mile by mile,  
Yet pressing toward the Eternal  
Smile.

O joy eternal !

O youth eternal without flaw !—  
Thee not the blessed Angels saw,  
Rapt in august adoring awe.

Not the dead have thee,

Not yet, O all-surpassing peace :  
Not till this veiling world shall cease  
And harvest yield its whole increase.

Not the dead know thee,

Not dead nor living nor unborn :  
Who in the new-sown field at morn  
Can measure out the harvest corn ?—

Yet they shall know thee :

And we with them, and unborn men  
With us, shall know and have thee  
when

The single grain shall wax to ten.

1855.

## ZION SAID

O SLAIN<sup>n</sup> for love of me, canst Thou  
be cold,

Be cold and far away in my  
distress ?

Is Thy love also changed, growing  
less and less,

That carried me through all the  
days of old ?

O Slain for love of me, O Love  
untold,

See how I flag and fail through  
weariness :

I flag, while sleepless foes dog  
me and press

On me : behold, O Lord, O Love,  
behold !

I am sick for home, the home of  
love indeed—

I am sick for Love, that dearest  
name for Thee :

Thou who hast bled, see how my  
heart doth bleed :

Open Thy bleeding Side and let me  
in :

Oh hide me in Thy Heart from  
doubt and sin,

Oh take me to Thyself and comfort  
me.

31 December 1855.

## HYMN AFTER GABRIELE ROSSETTI

### FIRST VERSION

*T' amo e fra dolci affanni.*

My Lord, my Love ! in love's unrest

How often have I said,

'Blessed that John who on Thy  
breast

Reclined his head.'

Thy touch it was, Love's Pelican,  
Transformed him from above,  
And made him amongst men the man  
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John ?  
Nay not so verily,  
While Thou indweldest as Thine own  
Me, even me :  
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's  
worth

My frail humanity ;  
Yea Thy Divinehood pouring forth,  
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,  
Me unto Thee alone ;  
Within my heart set up Thy state  
And mount Thy throne :  
The Seraphim in ecstasy  
Fall prone around Thy house,  
For which of them hath tasted Thee,  
My Manna and my Spouse ?

Now Thou dost wear me for a robe  
And sway and warm me through,  
I scarce seem lesser than the globe,  
Thy temple too :

O God, who for Thy dwelling-place  
Dost take delight in me,  
The ungirt immensity of space  
Hath not encompassed Thee.

#### SECOND VERSION

My Lord, my Love ! in pleasant  
pain

How often have I said,  
'Blessed that John who on Thy  
breast

Laid down his head.'  
It was that contact all divine  
Transformed him from above,  
And made him amongst men the man  
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John ?  
Nay not so verily,  
Now that Thou, Lord, both Man and  
God,

Dost dwell in me :  
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's  
might  
My frail humanity ;  
Yea, Thy Divinehood pouring forth,  
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,  
Even me to Thee alone ;  
Lord, reign upon my willing heart  
Which is Thy throne :  
To Thee the Seraphim fall down  
Adoring round Thy house ;  
For which of them hath tasted  
Thee,  
My Manna and my Spouse ?

Now that Thy life lives in my soul  
And sways and warms it through,  
I scarce seem lesser than the  
world,  
Thy temple too.

O God, who dwellest in my heart,  
My God who fillest me,  
The broad immensity itself  
Hath not encompassed Thee.

*Circa 1855.*

#### I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS

I AM pale with sick desire,  
For my heart is far away  
From this world's fitful fire  
And this world's waning day ;  
In a dream it overleaps  
A world of tedious ills  
To where the sunshine sleeps  
On the everlasting hills.—



Say the Saints : 'There Angels  
ease us  
Glorified and white.'  
They say : 'We rest in Jesus,  
Where is not day or night.'

My soul saith : I have sought  
For a home that is not gained,  
I have spent yet nothing bought,  
Have laboured but not attained ;  
My pride strove to mount and  
grow,  
And hath but dwindled down ;  
My love sought love, and lo !  
Hath not attained its crown.—  
Say the Saints : 'Fresh souls  
increase us,  
None languish or recede.'  
They say : 'We love our Jesus,  
And He loves us indeed.'

I cannot rise above,  
I cannot rest beneath,  
I cannot find out love,  
Or escape from death ;  
Dear hopes and joys gone by  
Still mock me with a name ;  
My best beloved die,  
And I cannot die with them.—  
Say the Saints : 'No deaths de-  
crease us  
Where our rest is glorious.'  
They say : 'We live in Jesus  
Who once died for us.'

Oh my soul, she beats her wings  
And pants to fly away  
Up to immortal things  
In the heavenly day :  
Yet she flags and almost faints :  
Can such be meant for me ?—  
'Come and see,' say the Saints ;  
Saith Jesus : 'Come and see.'

Say the Saints : 'His pleasures  
please us  
Before God and the Lamb.'  
'Come and taste My sweets,' saith  
Jesus :  
'Be with Me where I am.'

1 February 1856.

## HOW LONG ?

My life is long—Not so the Angels  
say  
Who watch me waste it, trembling  
whilst they weigh  
Against eternity my lavished day.

My life is long—Not so the Saints  
in peace  
Judge, filled with plenitude that  
cannot cease :  
Oh life was short which bought such  
large increase !

My life is long—Christ's word is  
different :  
The heat and burden of the day were  
spent  
On Him,—to me refreshing times are  
sent.

Give me an Angel's heart, that day  
nor night  
Rests not from adoration its delight,  
Still crying 'Holy holy' in the  
height.

Give me the heart of Saints, who,  
laid at rest  
In better Paradise than Abraham's  
breast,  
In the everlasting Rock have made  
their nest.

Give me Thy heart, O Christ, who  
thirty-three  
Slow years of sorrow countedst short  
for me,  
That where Thou art there Thy  
beloved might be.

14 April 1856.

### AMEN

It is over. What is over?  
Nay, now much is over truly!—  
Harvest days we toiled to sow for;  
Now the sheaves are gathered  
newly,  
Now the wheat is garnered duly.

It is finished. What is finished?  
Much is finished known or un-  
known:  
Lives are finished; time diminished;  
Was the fallow field left unsown?  
Will these buds be always un-  
blown?

It suffices. What suffices?  
All suffices reckoned rightly:  
Spring shall bloom where now the  
ice is,  
Roses make the bramble sightly,  
And the quickening sun shine  
brightly,  
And the latter wind blow lightly,  
And my garden teem with spices.

20 April 1856.

### A MARTYR

It is over the horrible pain,  
All is over the struggle and doubt:  
She's asleep though her friends stand  
and weep,  
She's asleep while the multitudes  
shout:

Not to wake to her anguish again,  
Not to wake until death is cast out.

Stoop, look at the beautiful face,  
See the smile on the satisfied  
mouth,  
The hands crost—she hath con-  
quered not lost:

She hath drunk who was fevered  
with drouth:  
She shall sleep in her safe resting-  
place  
While the hawk spreads her wings  
toward the South.

She shall sleep while slow seasons  
are given,  
While daylight and darkness go  
round:  
Her heart is at rest in its nest,  
Her body at rest in the ground:  
She has travelled the long road to  
heaven,  
She sought it and now she has  
found.

Will you follow the track that she  
trod,  
Will you tread in her footsteps,  
my friend?  
That pathway is rough, but enough  
Are the light and the balm that  
attend.

Do I tread in her steps, O my God,—  
Shall I joy with her joy in the end?

23 April 1856.

### NOW THEY DESIRE

THERE is a sleep we have not slept,  
Safe in a bed unknown:  
There hearts are stanch'd that long  
have wept  
Alone or bled alone:

Sweet sleep that dreams not, or  
 whose dream  
 Is foretaste of the truth :  
 Sweet sleep whose sweets are what  
 they seem,  
 Refreshing more than youth.

There is a sea whose waters clear  
 Are never tempest-tost :  
 There is a home whose children dear  
 Are saved, not one is lost :  
 There Cherubim and Seraphim  
 And Angels dwell with Saints,  
 Whose lustre no more dwindleth dim,  
 Whose ardour never faints.

There is a Love which fills desire  
 And can our love requite :  
 Like fire it draws our lesser fire,  
 Like greater light our light :  
 For it we agonize in strife,  
 We yearn, we famish thus—  
 Lo in the far-off land of life  
 Doth it not yearn for us ?

O fair, O fair Jerusalem,  
 How fair, how far away,  
 When shall we see thy Jasper-gem  
 That gives thee light for day ?  
 Thy sea of glass like fire, thy streets  
 Of glass like virgin gold,  
 Thy royal Elders on their seats,  
 Thy four Beasts manifold ?

Fair City of delights, the Bride  
 In raiment white and clean,  
 When shall we see thee loving-eyed,  
 Sun-girdled, happy Queen ?  
 Without a wrinkle or a spot,  
 Blood-cleansed, blood-purchased  
 once :  
 In how fair ground is fallen the lot  
 Of all thy happy sons !

Dove's eyes beneath thy parted lock,  
 A dove's soft voice is thine :  
 Thy nest is safe within the Rock,  
 Safe in the very Vine :  
 Thy walls salvation buildeth them  
 And all thy gates are praise,  
 O fair, O fair Jerusalem,  
 In sevenfold day of days.

13 August 1856.

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

For my Godchildren.

THE Shepherds had an Angel,  
 The Wise Men had a star,  
 But what have I, a little child,  
 To guide me home from far,  
 Where glad stars sing together  
 And singing angels are ?—

Lord Jesus is my Guardian,  
 So I can nothing lack :  
 The lambs lie in His bosom  
 Along life's dangerous track :  
 The wilful lambs that go astray  
 He bleeding fetches back.

Lord Jesus is my guiding star,  
 My beacon-light in heaven :  
 He leads me step by step along  
 The path of life uneven :  
 He, true light, leads me to that  
 land  
 Whose day shall be as seven.

Those Shepherds through the lonely  
 night  
 Sat watching by their sheep,  
 Until they saw the heavenly host  
 Who neither tire nor sleep,  
 All singing 'Glory glory'  
 In festival they keep.

Christ watches me, His little lamb,  
Cares for me day and night,  
That I may be His own in heaven :  
So angels clad in white  
Shall sing their ' Glory glory '  
For my sake in the height.

The Wise Men left their country  
To journey morn by morn,  
With gold and frankincense and  
myrrh,

Because the Lord was born :  
God sent a star to guide them  
And sent a dream to warn.

My life is like their journey,  
Their star is like God's book ;  
I must be like those good Wise Men  
With heavenward heart and  
look :

But shall I give no gifts to God ?—  
What precious gifts they took !

Lord, I will give my love to Thee,  
Than gold much costlier,  
Sweeter to Thee than frankincense,  
More prized than choicest  
myrrh :

Lord, make me dearer day by day,  
Day by day holier ;

Nearer and dearer day by day :  
Till I my voice unite,  
And sing my ' Glory glory '  
With angels clad in white ;  
All ' Glory glory ' given to Thee  
Through all the heavenly height.

6 October 1856.

### NOT YOURS BUT YOU

' HE died for me : what can I offer  
Him ?

Toward Him swells incense of  
perpetual prayer :

His court wear crowns and aureoles  
round their hair :

His ministers are subtle Cherubim ;  
Ring within ring, white intense  
Seraphim

Leap like immortal lightnings  
through the air.

What shall I offer Him ? defiled  
and bare,

My spirit broken and my brightness  
dim.'—

' Give Me thy youth.'—' I yield it to  
Thy rod,

As Thou didst yield Thy prime  
of youth for me.'—

' Give Me thy life.'—' I give it  
breath by breath ;

As Thou didst give Thy life so  
give I Thee.'—

' Give Me thy love.'—' So be it, my  
God, my God,

As Thou hast loved me even  
to bitter death.'

27 October 1856.

### AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT

As eager homebound traveller to  
the goal,

Or steadfast seeker on an un-  
searched main,

Or martyr panting for an aureole,  
My fellow-pilgrims pass me, and  
attain

That hidden mansion of perpetual  
peace

Where keen desire and hope  
dwell free from pain.

That gate stands open of perennial  
ease ;

I view the glory till I partly long,  
Yet lack the fire of love which  
quicken these.

O passing Angel, speed me with  
 a song,  
 A melody of heaven to reach my  
 heart  
 And rouse me to the race and  
 make me strong ;  
 Till in such music I take up my  
 part  
 Swelling those Hallelujahs full of  
 rest,  
 One, tenfold, hundredfold, with  
 heavenly art,  
 Fulfilling north and south and  
 east and west,  
 Thousand, ten thousandfold, in-  
 numerable,  
 All blent in one yet each one  
 manifest ;  
 Each one distinguished and beloved  
 as well  
 As if no second voice in earth or  
 heaven  
 Were lifted up the Love of God to  
 tell.  
 Ah Love of God, which thine own  
 Self hast given  
 To me most poor, and made me  
 rich in love,  
 Love that dost pass the tenfold  
 seven times seven,  
 Draw Thou mine eyes, draw Thou  
 my heart above,  
 My treasure and my heart store  
 Thou in Thee ;  
 Brood over me with yearnings of a  
 dove ;  
 Be Husband, Brother, closest  
 Friend to me ;  
 Love me as very mother loves her  
 son,  
 Her sucking firstborn fondled on  
 her knee :  
 Yea, more than mother loves her  
 little one ;

For, earthly, even a mother may  
 forget  
 And feel no pity for its piteous moan.  
 But thou, O Love of God, re-  
 member yet,  
 Through the dry desert, through the  
 waterflood  
 (Life, death), until the Great  
 White Throne is set.  
 If now I am sick in chewing the  
 bitter cud  
 Of sweet past sin, though solaced  
 by Thy grace  
 And oftentimes strengthened by Thy  
 Flesh and Blood,  
 How shall I then stand up before  
 Thy face  
 When from Thine eyes repentance  
 shall be hid  
 And utmost Justice stand in  
 Mercy's place ?  
 When every sin I thought or spoke  
 or did  
 Shall meet me at the inexorable  
 bar,  
 And there be no man standing in  
 the mid  
 To plead for me ; while star fallen  
 after star  
 With heaven and earth are like a  
 ripened shock,  
 And all time's mighty works and  
 wonders are  
 Consumed as in a moment ; when  
 no rock  
 Remains to fall on me, no tree to  
 hide,  
 But I stand all creation's gazing-  
 stock,  
 Exposed and comfortless on every  
 side,  
 Placed trembling in the final balances  
 Whose poise this hour, this  
 moment, must be tried.—

Ah Love of God, if greater love than  
this

Hath no man, that a man die for  
his friend,

And if such love of love Thine own  
Love is,

Plead with Thyself, with me,  
before the end ;

Redeem me from the irrevocable past ;  
Pitch Thou Thy Presence round  
me to defend ;

Yea seek with piercèd feet, yea hold  
me fast

With piercèd hands whose wounds  
were made by love.

Not what I am, remember what  
Thou wast

When darkness hid from Thee  
Thy heavens above,

And sin Thy Father's Face, while  
Thou didst drink

The bitter cup of death, didst  
taste thereof

For every man ; while Thou wast  
nigh to sink

Beneath the intense intolerable  
rod,

Grown sick of love ; not what I am,  
but think

Thy Life then ransomed mine,  
my God, my God !

*12 December 1856.*

## OLD AND NEW YEAR DITTIES

### I

NEW Year met me somewhat sad :

Old Year leaves me tired,

Stripped of favourite things I had,

Baulked of much desired :

Yet farther on my road to-day,

God willing, farther on my way.

New Year coming on apace,

What have you to give me ?

Bring you scathe or bring you grace,

Face me with an honest face,

You shall not deceive me :

Be it good or ill, be it what you will,

It needs shall help me on my road,

My rugged way to heaven, please

God.

*13 December 1856.*

### 2

Watch with me, men, women, and  
children dear,

You whom I love, for whom I hope  
and fear,

Watch with me this last vigil of the  
year.

Some hug their business, some their  
pleasure scheme ;

Some seize the vacant hour to sleep  
or dream ;

Heart locked in heart some kneel  
and watch apart,

Watch with me, blessed spirits, who  
delight

All through the holy night to walk  
in white,

Or take your ease after the long-  
drawn fight.

I know not if they watch with me :  
I know

They count this eve of resurrection  
slow,

And cry 'How long ?' with urgent  
utterance strong.

Watch with me, Jesus, in my loneli-  
ness :

Though others say me nay, yet say  
Thou yes ;

Though others pass me by, stop  
Thou to bless.



Yea, Thou dost stop with me this  
vigil night ;  
To - night of pain, to - morrow of  
delight :  
I, Love, am Thine ; Thou, Lord my  
God, art mine.

31 December 1858.

3

Passing away, saith the World,  
passing away :  
Chances, beauty, and youth, sapped  
day by day :  
Thy life never continueth in one  
stay.  
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark  
hair changing to grey  
That hath won neither laurel nor  
bay ?  
I shall clothe myself in Spring and  
bud in May :  
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild  
thy decay  
On my bosom for aye.  
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing  
away :  
With its burden of fear and hope,  
of labour and play,  
Hearken what the past doth witness  
and say :  
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine  
array,  
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf  
must decay.  
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morn-  
ing, one certain day  
Lo the Bridegroom shall come and  
shall not delay ;  
Watch thou and pray.  
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing  
away :

Winter passeth after the long delay :  
New grapes on the vine, new figs  
on the tender spray,  
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's  
May.

Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust  
Me, watch and pray :

Arise, come away, night is past and  
lo it is day,

My love, My sister, My spouse, thou  
shalt hear Me say.

Then I answered : Yea.

31 December 1860.

## A BETTER RESURRECTION

I HAVE no wit, no words, no tears ;  
My heart within me like a stone  
Is numbed too much for hopes or  
fears.

Look right, look left, I dwell alone ;  
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with  
grief

No everlasting hills I see ;  
My life is in the falling leaf :  
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,  
My harvest dwindled to a husk :  
Truly my life is void and brief  
And tedious in the barren dusk ;  
My life is like a frozen thing,  
No bud nor greenness can I see ;  
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring ;  
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,  
A broken bowl that cannot hold  
One drop of water for my soul  
Or cordial in the searching cold ;

Cast in the fire the perished thing ;  
 Melt and remould it, till it be  
 A royal cup for Him, my King :  
 O Jesus, drink of me.  
*30 June 1857.*

## THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

WHEN all the over-work of life  
 Is finished once, and fast asleep  
 We swerve no more beneath the  
 knife  
 But taste that silence cool and  
 deep ;  
 Forgetful of the highways rough,  
 Forgetful of the thorny scourge,  
 Forgetful of the tossing surge,  
 Then shall we find it is enough ?

How can we say 'enough' on  
 earth—  
 'Enough' with such a craving  
 heart ?

I have not found it since my birth,  
 But still have bartered part for  
 part.

I have not held and hugged the  
 whole,  
 But paid the old to gain the new :  
 Much have I paid, yet much is  
 due,

Till I am beggared sense and soul.

I used to labour, used to strive  
 For pleasure with a restless will :  
 Now if I save my soul alive  
 All else what matters, good or ill ?  
 I used to dream alone, to plan  
 Unspoken hopes and days to  
 come :—

Of all my past this is the sum—  
 I will not lean on child of man.

To give, to give, not to receive !  
 I long to pour myself, my soul,  
 Not to keep back or count or leave,  
 But king with king to give the  
 whole.

I long for one to stir my deep—  
 I have had enough of help and  
 gift—

I long for one to search and sift  
 Myself, to take myself and keep.

You scratch my surface with your  
 pin,

You stroke me smooth with  
 hushing breath :—

Nay pierce, nay probe, nay dig  
 within,

Probe my quick core and sound  
 my depth.

You call me with a puny call,  
 You talk, you smile, you nothing  
 do :

How should I spend my heart on  
 you,

My heart that so outweighs you all ?

Your vessels are by much too  
 strait :

Were I to pour, you could not  
 hold.—

Bear with me : I must bear to wait,  
 A fountain sealed through heat  
 and cold.

Bear with me days or months or  
 years :

Deep must call deep until the  
 end

When friend shall no more envy  
 friend

Nor vex his friend at unawares.

Not in this world of hope deferred,  
 This world of perishable stuff :—

Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard  
Nor heart conceived that full  
'enough':

Here moans the separating sea,  
Here harvests fail, here breaks  
the heart:

There God shall join and no  
man part,

I full of Christ and Christ of me.

27 August 1857.

# DIVERS WORLDS. TIME AND ETERNITY

(From 27 August 1857 to before 1893.)

EARTH has clear call of daily bells,  
A chancel-vault of gloom and star,  
A rapture where the anthems are,  
A thunder when the organ swells:  
Alas, man's daily life—what else?—  
Is out of tune with daily bells.

While Paradise accords the chimes  
Of Earth and Heaven, its patient  
pause

Is rest fulfilling music's laws.  
Saints sit and gaze, where oftentimes  
Precursive flush of morning climbs  
And air vibrates with coming chimes.

6 August 1858.

Escape to the Mountain.

I PEERED within, and saw a world  
of sin;

Upward, and saw a world of  
righteousness;

Downward, and saw darkness and  
flame begin

Which no man can express.

I girt me up, I gat me up to flee  
From face of darkness and devour-  
ing flame:

R

And fled I had, but guilt is load-  
ing me

With dust of death and shame.

Yet still the light of righteousness  
beams pure,

Beams to me from the world of  
far-off day:—

Lord, Who hast called them happy  
that endure,

Lord, make me such as they.

Before 1893.

I LIFT mine eyes to see: earth  
vanisheth.

I lift up wistful eyes and bend my  
knee:

Trembling, bowed down, and face to  
face with Death,

I lift mine eyes to see.

Lo what I see is Death that  
shadows me:

Yet whilst I, seeing, draw a shudder-  
ing breath,

Death like a mist grows rare  
perceptibly.

Beyond the darkness light, beyond  
the scathe

Healing, beyond the Cross a palm-  
branch tree,

Beyond Death Life, on evidence of  
faith:

I lift mine eyes to see.

Before 1893.

Yet a little while.

HEAVEN is not far, tho' far the sky  
Overarching earth and main.

It takes not long to live and die,  
Die, revive, and rise again.

O

Not long : how long ? Oh long re-  
echoing song !

O Lord, how long ?

*Before 1893.*

Behold, it was very good.

ALL things are fair, if we had eyes  
to see

How first God made them goodly  
everywhere :

And goodly still in Paradise they  
be,—

All things are fair.

O Lord, the solemn heavens Thy  
praise declare ;

The multi-fashioned saints bring  
praise to Thee,

As doves fly home and cast away  
their care.

As doves on divers branches of their  
tree,

Perched high or low, sit all con-  
tented there,

Not mourning any more ; in each  
degree

All things are fair.

*Before 1893.*

Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

WHEN all the overwork of life

Is finished once, and fallen asleep

We shrink no more beneath the knife,

But having sown prepare to reap ;

Delivered from the crossway rough,

Delivered from the thorny scourge,

Delivered from the tossing surge,

Then shall we find—(please God !)

—it is enough ?

Not in this world of hope deferred,

This world of perishable stuff ;

Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath  
heard,

Nor heart conceived that full  
'enough' ;

Here moans the separating sea,

Here harvests fail, here breaks the  
heart ;

There God shall join and no man  
part,

All one in Christ, so one—(please  
God !)—with me.

*27 August 1857.*

THIS near-at-hand land breeds pain  
by measure :

That far-away land overflows with  
treasure

Of heaped-up good pleasure.

Our land that we see is befouled by  
evil :

The land that we see not makes  
mirth and revel,

Far from death and devil.

This land hath for music sobbing and  
sighing :

That land hath soft speech and sweet  
soft replying

Of all loves undying.

This land hath for pastime errors and  
follies :

That land hath unending unflagging  
solace

Of full-chanted 'Holies.'

'Up and away,' call the Angels to  
us ;

'Come to our home where no foes  
pursue us,

And no tears bedew us ;

'Where that which riseth sets again  
never,  
Where that which springeth flows in  
a river  
For ever and ever ;

'Where harvest justifies labour of  
sowing,  
Where that which budded comes to  
the blowing,  
Sweet beyond your knowing.

'Come and laugh with us, sing in  
our singing ;  
Come, yearn no more, but rest in  
your clinging.  
See what we are bringing ;

'Crowns like our own crowns, robes  
for your wearing ;  
For love of you we kiss them in  
bearing,  
All good with you sharing :

'Over you gladdening, in you de-  
lighting ;  
Come from your famine, your failure,  
your fighting ;  
Come to full wrong-righting.

'Come, where all balm is garnered  
to ease you ;  
Come, where all beauty is spread out  
to please you ;  
Come, gaze upon Jesu.'

*Circa 1877.*

'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea ?'  
THE sea laments with unappeasable  
Hankering wail of loss,  
Lifting its hands on high and  
passing by  
Out of the lovely light :

No foambow any more may crest  
that swell  
Of clamorous waves which toss ;  
Lifting its hands on high it  
passes by  
From light into the night.  
Peace, peace, thou sea ! God's wis-  
dom worketh well,  
Assigns it crown or cross :  
Lift we all hands on high, and  
passing by  
Attest—God doeth right.

*Before 1893.*

And there was no more Sea.

VOICES from above and from be-  
neath,  
Voices of creation near and far,  
Voices out of life and out of death,  
Out of measureless space,  
Sun, moon, star,  
In oneness of contentment  
offering praise.

Heaven and earth and sea jubilant,  
Jubilant all things that dwell  
therein ;  
Filled to fullest overflow they chant,  
Still roll onward, swell,  
Still begin  
Never flagging praise intermin-  
able.

Thou who must fall silent in a while,  
Chant thy sweetest, gladdest, best,  
at once ;  
Sun thyself to-day, keep peace and  
smile ;  
By love upward send  
Orisons,  
Accounting love thy lot and  
love thine end.

*Before 1893.*

ROSES on a brier,  
 Pearls from out the bitter sea,  
 Such is earth's desire  
 However pure it be.

Neither bud nor brier,  
 Neither pearl nor brine for me :  
 Be stilled, my long desire ;  
 There shall be no more sea.

Be stilled, my passionate heart ;  
 Old earth shall end, new earth  
 shall be :  
 Be still, and earn thy part  
 Where shall be no more sea.

*Before 1886.*

WE are of those who tremble at Thy  
 word ;  
 Who faltering walk in darkness  
 toward our close  
 Of mortal life, by terrors curbed and  
 spurred :  
 We are of those.

We journey to that land which no  
 man knows  
 Who any more can make his voice  
 be heard  
 Above the clamour of our wants  
 and woes.

Not ours the hearts Thy loftiest  
 love hath stirred,  
 Not such as we Thy lily and Thy  
 rose : —  
 Yet, Hope of those who hope with  
 hope deferred,  
 We are of those.

*Before 1893.*

Awake thou that sleepest.

THE night is far spent, the day is at  
 hand :

Let us therefore cast off the  
 works of darkness,  
 And let us put on the armour  
 of light.

Night for the dead in their stiff-  
 ness and starkness !

Day for the living who mount  
 in their might  
 Out of their graves to the beautiful  
 land.

Far, far away lies the beautiful  
 land :

Mount on wide wings of exceeding  
 desire,

Mount, look not back, mount to  
 life and to light,

Mount by the gleam of your lamps  
 all on fire

Up from the dead men and up  
 from the night.

The night is far spent, the day is at  
 hand.

*Before 1893.*

WE know not when, we know not  
 where,

We know not what that world will  
 be ;

But this we know—it will be fair  
 To see.

With heart athirst and thirsty face  
 We know and know not what shall  
 be :

Christ Jesus bring us of His grace  
 To see.



Christ Jesus bring us of His grace,  
 Beyond all prayers our hope can  
     pray,  
 One day to see Him face to Face,  
     One day.

*Before 1886.*

I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills.

WHEN sick of life and all the world—  
 How sick of all desire but Thee!—  
 I lift mine eyes up to the hills,  
     Eyes of my heart that see,  
 I see beyond all death and ills  
 Refreshing green for heart and eyes,  
 The golden streets and gateways  
     pearled,  
 The trees of Paradise.

! 'There is a time for all things,'  
     saith  
 The Word of Truth, Thyself the  
     Word :  
 And many things Thou reasonest of :  
     A time for hope deferred,  
 But time is now for grief and  
     fears ;  
 A time for life, but now is death ;  
 Oh when shall be the time of love  
     When Thou shalt wipe our tears ?

Then the new Heavens and Earth  
     shall be  
 Where righteousness shall dwell in-  
     deed ;  
 There shall be no more blight, nor  
     need,  
     Nor barrier of the sea ;  
 No sun and moon alternating,  
 For God shall be the Light thereof ;  
 No sorrow more, no death, no sting,  
     For God Who reigns is Love.

*Before 1886.*

Then whose shall those things be ?

OH what is earth, that we should  
     build  
 Our houses here, and seek concealed  
 Poor treasure, and add field to field,  
 And heap to heap and store to  
     store,  
 Still grasping more and seeking  
     more,  
 While step by step Death nears the  
     door ?  
*16 July 1858.*

His Banner over me was Love.

IN that world we weary to attain,  
     Love's furled banner floats at large  
     unfurled ;  
 There is no more doubt and no more  
     pain  
 In that world.

There are gems and gold and  
     inlets pearled ;  
 There the verdure fadeth not again ;  
 There no clinging tendrils droop  
     uncurled.

Here incessant tides stir up the main,  
     Stormy miry depths aloft are  
     hurled :  
 There is no more sea, or storm, or  
     stain,  
 In that world.  
*Before 1886.*

BELOVED, yield thy time to God, for  
     He  
     Will make eternity thy recom-  
     pense ;  
 Give all thy substance for His Love,  
     and be  
     Beatified past earth's experience.

Serve Him in bonds, until He set thee free ;

Serve Him in dust, until He lift thee thence ;

Till death be swallowed up in victory

When the great trumpet sounds to bid thee hence.

Shall setting day win day that will not set ?

Poor price wert thou to spend thyself for Christ,

Had not His wealth thy poverty sufficed :

Yet since He makes His garden of thy clod,

Water thy lily, rose, or violet,  
And offer up thy sweetness unto God.

*Before 1893.*

TIME seems not short :

If so I call to mind

Its vast prerogative to loose or bind,

And bear and strike amont  
All humankind.

Time seems not long :

If I peer out and see

Sphere within sphere, time in eternity,

And hear the alternate song  
Cry endlessly.

Time greatly short,

O time so briefly long,

Yea, time sole battle-ground of right and wrong :

Art thou a time for sport  
And for a song ?

*Before 1893.*

THE half moon shows a face of plaintive sweetness

Ready and poised to wax or wane ;

A fire of pale desire in incompleteness,

Tending to pleasure or to pain :—

Lo while we gaze she rolleth on in fleetness

To perfect loss or perfect gain.

Half bitterness we know, we know half sweetness ;

This world is all on wax, on wane :

When shall completeness round time's incompleteness,

Fulfilling joy, fulfilling pain ?

Lo, while we ask, life rolleth on in fleetness

To finished loss or finished gain.

*Before 1893.*

' As the Doves to their windows.'

THEY throng from the east and the west,

The north and the south, with a song ;

To golden abodes of their rest

They throng.

Eternity stretches out long :

Time, brief at its worst or its best,  
Will quit them of ruin and wrong.

A rainbow aloft for their crest,

A palm for their weakness made strong :

As doves breast all winds to their nest,

They throng.

*Before 1893.*

OH knell of a passing time,  
Will it never cease to chime ?  
Oh stir of the tedious sea,  
Will it never cease to be ?  
Yea, when night and when day,  
Moon and sun, pass away.

Surely the sun burns low,  
The moon makes ready to go,  
Broad ocean ripples to waste,  
Time is running in haste,  
Night is numbered, and day  
Numbered to pass away.

*Before 1893.*

TIME passeth away with its pleasure  
and pain,

Its garlands of cypress and bay,  
With wealth and with want, with a  
balm and a bane,  
Time passeth away.

Eternity cometh to stay,  
Eternity stayeth to go not again ;  
Eternity barring the way,

Arresting all courses of planet or  
main,

Arresting who plan or who pray,  
Arresting creation : while grand in  
its wane

Time passeth away.

*Before 1893.*

The Earth shall tremble at the Look  
of Him.

TREMBLE, thou earth, at the Presence  
of the Lord

Whose Will conceived thee and  
brought thee to the birth,  
Always, everywhere, thy Lord to be  
adored :

Tremble, thou earth.

Wilt thou laugh time away in  
music and mirth ?  
Time hath days of pestilence, hath  
days of a sword,  
Hath days of hunger and thirst in  
desolate dearth.

Till eternity wake up the multichord  
Thrilled harp of heaven, and  
breathe full its organ's girth  
For joy of heaven and infinite  
reward,  
Tremble, thou earth.

*Before 1893.*

TIME lengthening, in the lengthening  
seemeth long :

But ended Time will seem a little  
space,

A little while from morn to evensong,  
A little while that ran a rapid race ;  
A little while, when once Eternity  
Denies proportion to the other's  
pace.

Eternity to be and be and be,  
Ever beginning, never ending  
still,

Still undiminished far as thought can  
see ;

Farther than thought can see, by  
dint of will

Strung up and strained and shooting  
like a star

Past utmost bound of everlasting  
hill :

Eternity unswaddled, without bar,  
Finishing sequence in its awful  
sum ;

Eternity still rolling forth its car,  
Eternity still here and still to  
come.

*Before 1893.*

All flesh is Grass.

So brief a life, and then an endless  
life

Or endless death ;

So brief a life, then endless peace  
or strife :

Whoso considereth

How man but like a flower

Or shoot of grass

Blooms an hour,

Well may sigh 'Alas !'

So brief a life, and then an endless  
grief

Or endless joy ;

So brief a life, then ruin or relief :

What solace, what annoy

Of Time needs dwelling on ?

It is, it was,

It is done,

While we sigh 'Alas !'

Yet saints are singing in a happy  
hope

Forecasting pleasure,

Bright eyes of faith enlarging all  
their scope ;

Saints love beyond Time's  
measure :

Where love is, there is bliss

That will not pass ;

Where love is,

Dies away 'Alas !'

*Before 1893.*

HEAVEN'S chimes are slow, but sure  
to strike at last :

Earth's sands are slow, but surely  
dropping thro' :

And much we have to suffer,  
much to do,

Before the time be past.

Chimes that keep time are neither  
slow nor fast :

Not many are the numbered  
sands nor few :

A time to suffer, and a time to do,  
And then the time is past.

*Before 1886.*

There remaineth therefore a Rest to the  
People of God.

REST remains when all is done,  
Work and vigil, prayer and fast,  
All fulfilled from first to last,  
All the length of time gone past  
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod  
Urge us on the narrow way :  
Bear we now as best we may  
Heat and burden of to-day,  
Struggling, panting up to God.

*Before 1886.*

PARTING after parting,  
Sore loss and gnawing pain :  
Meeting grows half a sorrow  
Because of parting again.  
When shall the day break  
That these things shall not be ?  
When shall new earth be ours  
Without a sea,  
And time that is not time  
But eternity ?

To meet, worth living for ;  
Worth dying for, to meet ;  
To meet, worth parting for,  
Bitter forgot in sweet :  
To meet, worth parting before,  
Never to part more.

*June 1858 and June 1864.*

They put their trust in Thee, and were not  
confounded.

I.

TOGETHER once, but never more  
While Time and Death run out  
their runs :

Tho' sundered now as shore from  
shore,  
Together once.

Nor rising suns, nor setting suns,  
Nor life renewed which springtide  
bore,  
Make one again Death's sundered  
ones.

Eternity holds rest in store,  
Holds hope of long reunions :  
But holds it what they hungered for  
Together once ?

II.

Whatso it be, howso it be, Amen.  
Blessed it is, believing, not to see.  
Now God knows all that is ; and we  
shall, then,  
Whatso it be.

God's Will is best for man whose  
will is free.  
God's Will is better to us, yea, than  
ten  
Desires whereof He holds and  
weighs the key.

Amid her household cares He guides  
the wren,  
He guards the shifty mouse from  
poverty ;  
He knows all wants, allots each  
where and when,  
Whatso it be.

*Before 1886.*

SHORT is time, and only time is  
bleak ;

Gauge the exceeding height thou  
hast to climb :

Long eternity is nigh to seek :  
Short is time.

Time is shortening with the wintry  
rime :

Pray and watch and pray, girt up  
and meek ;

Praying, watching, praying, chime  
by chime.

Pray by silence if thou canst not  
speak :

Time is shortening ; pray on till  
the prime :

Time is shortening ; soul, fulfil thy  
week :

Short is time.

*Before 1893.*

For Each.

MY harvest is done, its promise is  
ended,

Weak and watery sets the sun,  
Day and night in one mist are  
blended,

My harvest is done.

Long while running, how short  
when run,

Time to eternity has descended,  
Timeless eternity has begun.

Was it the narrow way that I  
wended ?

Snares and pits was it mine to  
shun ?

The scythe has fallen, so long sus-  
pended,

My harvest is done.

*Before 1893.*

For All.

Man's harvest is past, his summer  
is ended,

Hope and fear are finished at last,  
Day hath descended, night hath  
ascended.

Man's harvest is past.

Time is fled that fled so fast :  
All the unended remains unended,  
The perfect, perfect : all lots are  
cast.

Waiting till earth and ocean be  
ended,

Waiting for call of the trumpet  
blast,

Each soul at goal of that way it  
wended,—

Man's harvest is past.

*Before 1893.*

### ADVENT

THIS Advent moon shines cold and  
clear,

These Advent nights are long ;  
Our lamps have burned year after  
year

And still their flame is strong.

'Watchman, what of the night ?' we  
cry,

Heart-sick with hope deferred :

'No speaking signs are in the sky,'  
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,

The servants watch within ;

The watch is long betimes and late,  
The prize is slow to win.

'Watchman, what of the night ?'  
But still

His answer sounds the same :

'No daybreak tops the utmost hill,  
Nor pale our lamps of flame.'

One to another hear them speak  
The patient virgins wise :

'Surely He is not far to seek'—

'All night we watch and rise.'

'The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim ;

Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him.'

One with another, soul with soul,  
They kindle fire from fire :

'Friends watch us who have touched  
the goal.'

'They urge us, come up higher.'

'With them shall rest our waysore  
feet,

With them is built our home,  
With Christ.'—'They sweet, but  
He most sweet,  
Sweeter than honeycomb.'

There no more parting, no more pain,

The distant ones brought near,

The lost so long are found again,

Long lost but longer dear :

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not  
heard,

Nor heart conceived that rest,

With them our good things long  
deferred,

With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,

We laugh for day shall rise,

We sing a slow contented song

And knock at Paradise.

Weeping we hold Him fast Who  
wept

For us, we hold Him fast ;

And will not let Him go except

He bless us first or last.



Weeping we hold Him fast to-night ;  
 We will not let Him go  
 Till daybreak smite our wearied  
 sight  
 And summer smite the snow :  
 Then figs shall bud, and dove-with  
 dove  
 Shall coo the livelong day ;  
 Then He shall say, ' Arise, My love,  
 My fair one, come away.'  
*2 May 1858.*

## CHRISTIAN AND JEW

## A DIALOGUE

' OH happy happy land !  
 Angels like rushes stand  
 About the wells of light.'—  
 ' Alas, I have not eyes for this fair  
 sight :  
 Hold fast my hand.'—  
 ' As in a soft wind, they  
 Bend all one blessed way,  
 Each bowed in his own glory,  
 star with star.'—  
 ' I cannot see so far ;  
 Here shadows are.'—  
 ' White-winged the cherubim,  
 Yet whiter seraphim,  
 Glow white with intense fire of  
 love.'—  
 ' Mine eyes are dim :  
 I look in vain above,  
 And miss their hymn.'—  
 ' Angels, Archangels cry  
 One to other ceaselessly  
 (I hear them sing)  
 One " Holy, Holy, Holy " to their  
 King.'—  
 ' I do not hear them, I.'—

' Joy to thee, Paradise,  
 Garden and goal and nest !  
 Made green for wearied eyes ;  
 Much softer than the breast  
 Of mother-dove clad in a rainbow's  
 dyes.

' All precious souls are there  
 Most safe, elect by grace,  
 All tears are wiped for ever from  
 their face :  
 Untired in prayer  
 They wait and praise  
 Hidden for a little space.

' Boughs of the Living Vine,  
 They spread in summer shine  
 Green leaf with leaf :  
 Sap of the Royal Vine, it stirs like  
 wine  
 In all both less and chief.

' Sing to the Lord,  
 All spirits of all flesh, sing ;  
 For He hath not abhorred  
 Our low estate nor scorned our  
 offering :  
 Shout to our King.'—

' But Zion said :  
 My Lord forgetteth me.  
 Lo she hath made her bed  
 In dust ; forsaken weepeth she  
 Where alien rivers swell the  
 sea.

' She laid her body as the ground,  
 Her tender body as the ground  
 to those  
 Who passed ; her harpstrings cannot  
 sound  
 In a strange land ; discrowned  
 She sits, and drunk with woes.'—

'O drunken not with wine,  
Whose sins and sorrows have fulfilled the sum,—  
Be not afraid, arise, be no more dumb;

Arise, shine,  
For thy light is come.'

'Can these bones live?'—  
'God knows:

The prophet saw such clothed  
with flesh and skin;

A wind blew on them, and life  
entered in;

They shook and rose.

Hasten the time, O Lord, blot  
out their sin,  
Let life begin.'

9 July 1858.

### A BURDEN

THEY lie at rest asleep and dead,  
The dew is cool above their head,  
They knew not when past summer  
fled—  
*Amen.*

They lie at rest and quite forget  
The hopes and fears that wring us  
yet:  
Their eyes are set, their heart is  
set—  
*Amen.*

They lie with us, yet gone away  
Hear nothing that we sob or say  
Beneath the thorn of wintry May—  
*Miserere.*

They lie asleep with us, and take  
Sweet rest although our heart should  
ache,  
Rest on although our heart should  
break—  
*Miserere.*

Together all yet each alone,  
Each laid at rest beneath his own  
Smooth turf or white appointed  
stone—  
*Amen.*

When shall our slumbers be so deep,  
And bleeding heart and eyes that  
weep  
Lie lapped in the sufficient sleep?—  
*Miserere.*

We dream of them, and who shall say  
They never dream while far away  
Of us between the night and day?—  
*Sursum Corda.*

Gone far away: or it may be  
They lean toward us and hear and  
see,  
Yea and remember more than we—  
*Amen.*

For wherefore should we think them  
far  
Who know not where those spirits are  
That shall be glorious as a star?—  
*Hallelujah.*

Where chill or change can never  
rise,  
Deep in the depth of Paradise  
They rest world-wearied heart and  
eyes—  
*Jubilate.*

Safe as a hidden brooding dove,  
With perfect peace within, above,  
They love, and look for perfect  
love—  
*Hallelujah.*

We hope and love with throbbing  
breast,  
They hope and love and are at rest:  
And yet we question which is best—  
*Miserere.*

Oh what is earth, that we should  
 build  
 Our houses here, and seek concealed  
 Poor treasure, and add field to field

And heap to heap and store to store,  
 Still grasping more and seeking more  
 While Death stands knocking at the  
 door?— *Cui bono?*

But one will answer: Changed and  
 pale  
 And sick at heart, I thirst, I fail  
 For love, I thirst without avail—  
*Miserrima.*

Sweet love, a fountain sealed to me:  
 Sweet love, the one sufficiency  
 For all the longings that can be—  
*Amen.*

Oh happy they alone whose lot  
 Is love! I search from spot to spot:  
 In life, in death, I find it not—  
*Miserrima.*

Not found in life: nay verily.  
 I too have sought: come sit with  
 me,  
 And grief for grief shall answer  
 thee— *Miserrima.*

Sit with me where the sapless leaves  
 Are heaped and sere: to him who  
 grieves  
 What cheer have last year's harvest-  
 sheaves?— *Cui bono?*

Not found in life, yet found in death.  
 Hush, throbbing heart and sobbing  
 breath!  
 There is a nest of love beneath

The sod, a home prepared before:  
 Our brethren whom one mother bore  
 Live there, and toil and ache no  
 more— *Hallelujah.*

Our friends, our kinstolk, great and  
 small,  
 Our loved, our best beloved of all,  
 They watch across the parting wall

(Do they not watch?) and count the  
 creep  
 Of time, and sound the shallowing  
 deep,  
 Till we in port shall also sleep—  
*Hallelujah, Amen.*

16 July 1858.

## ONLY BELIEVE

I STOOD by weeping  
 Yet a sorrowful silence keeping  
 While an Angel smote my love  
 As she lay sleeping.

'Is there a bed above  
 More fragrant than these violets  
 That are white like death?'

'White like a dove,  
 Flowers in the blessed islets  
 Breathe sweeter breath  
 All fair morns and twilights.'

'Is the gold there  
 More golden than these tresses?'

'There heads are aureoled  
 And crowned like gold  
 With light most rare.'

'Are the bowers of Heaven  
 More choice than these?'

'To them are given  
All odorous shady trees.  
Earth's bowers are wildernesses,  
Compared with the recesses  
Made soft there now  
Nest-like twixt bough and bough.'

'Who shall live in such a nest?'

'Heart with heart at rest :  
All they whose troubles cease  
In peace :  
Souls that wrestled  
Now are nestled  
There at ease,—  
Throng from east and west,  
From north and south,  
To plenty from the land of drouth.'

*September 1858.*

## NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS CITIZENS

*(From September 1858 to before 1893.)*

The Holy City, New Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM is built of gold,  
Of crystal, pearl, and gem :  
Oh fair thy lustres manifold,  
Thou fair Jerusalem !  
Thy citizens who walk in white  
Have nought to do with day or  
night,  
And drink the river of delight.

Jerusalem makes melody  
For simple joy of heart ;  
An organ of full compass she,  
One-tuned thro' every part :  
While not to day or night belong  
Her matins and her evensong,  
The one thanksgiving of her throng.

Jerusalem a garden is,  
A garden of delight ;  
Leaf, flower, and fruit, make fair her  
trees,

Which see not day or night :  
Beside her River clear and calm  
The Tree of Life grows with the  
Palm,  
For triumph and for food and balm.

Jerusalem, where song nor gem  
Nor fruit nor waters cease,  
God bring us to Jerusalem,  
God bring us home in peace ;  
The strong who stand, the weak  
who fall,  
The first and last, the great and  
small,  
Home one by one, home one and  
all.

*Circa 1877.*

WHEN wickedness is broken as a  
tree

Paradise comes to light, ah holy  
land !

Whence death has vanished like  
a shifting sand,  
And barrenness is banished with  
the sea,

Its bulwarks are salvation fully  
manned,

All gems it hath for glad variety,  
And pearls for pureness radiant  
glimmeringly,

And gold for grandeur where all  
good is grand.

An inner ring of saints meets linked  
above,

And linked of angels is an outer  
ring ;

For voice of waters or for  
thunders' voice

Lo harps and songs wherewith  
all saints rejoice,  
And all the trembling there of  
any string  
Is but a trembling of enraptured  
love.

*Before 1893.*

JERUSALEM of fire  
And gold and pearl and gem,  
Saints flock to fill thy choir,  
Jerusalem.

Lo, thrones thou hast for them ;  
Desirous they desire  
Thy harp, thy diadem,

Thy bridal white attire,  
A palm-branch from thy stem :  
Thy holiness their hire,  
Jerusalem.

*Before 1893.*

She shall be brought unto the King.

THE King's Daughter is all glorious  
within,

Her clothing of wrought gold sets  
forth her bliss ;

Where the endless choruses of  
heaven begin

The King's Daughter is ;

Perfect her notes in the perfect  
harmonies ;

With tears wiped away, no conscience  
of sin,

Loss forgotten and sorrowful  
memories ;

Alight with Cherubin, afire with  
Seraphin,

Lily for pureness, rose for charities,

With joy won and with joy evermore  
to win,

The King's Daughter is.

*Before 1893.*

WHO is this that cometh up not  
alone

From the fiery - flying - serpent  
wilderness,

Leaning upon her own Beloved  
One ?

Who is this ?

Lo, the King of kings' daughter,  
a high princess,  
Going home as bride to her Hus-  
band's Throne,

Virgin queen in perfected loveli-  
ness.

Her eyes a dove's eyes and her  
voice a dove's moan,

She shows like a full moon for  
heavenliness :

Eager saints and angels ask in  
heaven's zone,

Who is this ?

*Before 1886.*

WHO sits with the King in His  
Throne? Not a slave but a  
Bride,

With this King of all Greatness  
and Grace Who reigns not  
alone ;

His Glory her glory, where glorious  
she glows at His side

Who sits with the King in His  
Throne.

She came from dim uttermost  
depths which no Angel hath  
known,

Leviathan's whirlpool and Dragon's  
dominion worldwide,  
From the frost or the fire to  
Paradisiacal zone.

Lo, she is fair as a dove, silvery,  
golden, dove-eyed :

Lo, Dragon laments and Death  
laments, for their prey is  
flown :

She dwells in the Vision of Peace,  
and her peace shall abide

Who sits with the King in His  
Throne.

*Before 1893.*

Antipas.

HIDDEN from the darkness of our  
mortal sight,

Hidden in the Paradise of lovely  
light,

Hidden in God's Presence, wor-  
shipped face to face,

Hidden in the sanctuary of Christ's  
embrace.

Up, O Wills ! to track him home  
among the blest ;

Up, O Hearts ! to know him in the  
joy of rest ;

Where no darkness more shall hide  
him from our sight,

Where we shall be love with love,  
and light with light,

Worshiping our God together face  
to face,

Wishless in the sanctuary of Christ's  
embrace.

*Before 1893.*

' Beautiful for situation.'

A LOVELY city in a lovely land,  
Whose citizens are lovely, and  
whose King

Is Very Love ; to Whom all  
Angels sing ;

To Whom all saints sing crowned,  
their sacred band

Saluting Love with palm-branch in  
their hand :

Thither all doves on gold or silver  
wing

Flock home thro' agate windows  
glistering

Set wide, and where pearl gates  
wide open stand.

A bower of roses is not half so sweet,  
A cave of diamonds doth not  
glitter so,

Nor Lebanon is fruitful set  
thereby :

And thither thou, beloved, and  
thither I

May set our heart and set our  
face and go,

Faint yet pursuing, home on tireless  
feet.

*Before 1893*

LORD, by what inconceivable dim  
road

Thou leadest man on footsore  
pilgrimage !

Weariness is his rest from stage  
to stage,

Brief halting-places are his sole  
abode.

Onward he fares thro' rivers over-  
flowed,

Thro' deserts where all doleful  
creatures rage ;

Onward from year to year, from  
age to age,

He groans and totters onward with  
his load.

Behold how inconceivable his way ;  
How tenfold inconceivable the  
goal,



His goal of hope deferred, his  
promised peace :

Yea, but behold him sitting  
down at ease,

Refreshed in body and refreshed  
in soul,

At rest from labour on the Sabbath  
Day.

*Before 1893.*

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good  
news from a far country.

‘GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,

Will you pluck me lilies ?

Or will you show me where they  
grow,

Show where the limpid rill is ?

But is your hair of gold or light,

And is your foot of flake or fire,

And have you wings rolled up from  
sight

And songs to slake desire ?’

‘I pluck fresh flowers of Paradise,

Lilies and roses red,

A bending sceptre for my hand,

A crown to crown my head.

I sing my songs, I pluck my flowers

Sweet-scented from their fragrant  
trees ;

I sing, we sing, amid the bowers,

And gather palm-branches.’

‘Is there a path to Heaven

My stumbling foot may tread ?

And will you show that way to go,

That bower and blossom bed ?’

‘The path to Heaven is steep and  
straight

And scorched, but ends in shade  
of trees,

Where yet a while we sing and wait

And gather palm-branches.’

*Before 1886.*

R

CAST down but not destroyed,  
chastened not slain :

Thy Saints have lived that life,  
but how can I ?

I, who thro’ dread of death do  
daily die

By daily foretaste of an unfelt pain.

Lo I depart who shall not come  
again ;

Lo as a shadow I am flitting by ;

As a leaf trembling, as a wheel I  
fly,

While death flies faster and my flight  
is vain.

Chastened not slain, cast down but  
not destroyed :—

If thus Thy Saints have struggled  
home to peace,

Why should not I take heart  
to be as they ?

They too pent passions in a  
house of clay,

Fear and desire, and pangs and  
ecstasies ;

Yea, thus they joyed who now are  
overjoyed.

*Before 1893.*

LIFT up thine eyes to seek the in-  
visible :

Stir up thy heart to choose the  
still unseen :

Strain up thy hope in glad per-  
petual green

To scale the exceeding height where  
all saints dwell.

Saints, is it well with you ?—Yea, it  
is well.—

Where they have reaped, by faith  
kneel thou to glean :

Because they stooped so low to  
reap, they lean

Now over golden harps unspeak-  
able.—

P

But thou purblind and deafened,  
knowest thou  
Those glorious beauties unex-  
perienced

By ear or eye or by heart  
hitherto?—

I know Whom I have trusted: where-  
fore now

All amiable, accessible tho' fenced,  
Golden Jerusalem floats full in  
view.

*Before 1893.*

Love is strong as Death.

AS flames that consume the moun-  
tains, as winds that coerce the  
sea,

Thy men of renown show forth Thy  
might in the clutch of death:

Down they go into silence, yet the  
Trump of the Jubilee

Swells not Thy praise as swells it  
the breathless pause of their  
breath.

What is the flame of their fire, if so  
I may catch the flame;

What the strength of their strength,  
if also I may wax strong?

The flaming fire of their strength is  
the love of Jesu's Name,

In Whom their death is life, their  
silence utters a song.

*Before 1893.*

Let them rejoice in their beds.

CRIMSON as the rubies, crimson as  
the roses,

Crimson as the sinking sun,

Singing on his crimsoned bed each  
saint reposes,

Fought his fight, his battle won;

Till the rosy east the day of days  
discloses,  
All his work, save waiting, done.

Far above the stars, while under-  
neath the daisies,

Resting, for his race is run,

Unto Thee his heart each quiet saint  
upraises,

God the Father, Spirit, Son;

Unto Thee his heart, unto Thee his  
praises,

O Lord God, the Three in One.

*Before 1893.*

SLAIN in their high places: fallen on  
rest

Where the eternal peace lights up  
their faces,

In God's sacred acre breast to  
breast:—

Slain in their high places.

From all tribes, all families, all  
races,

Gathered home together; east or  
west

Sending home its tale of gifts and  
graces.

Twine, oh twine, heaven's amaranth  
for their crest,

Raise their praise while home their  
triumph paces;

Kings by their own King of kings  
confessed,

Slain in their high places.

*Before 1893.*

‘What hath God wrought!

THE shout of a King is among them.  
One day may I be

Of that perfect communion of lovers  
contented and free  
In the land that is very far off, and  
far off from the sea.

The shout of the King is among them.  
One King and one song,  
One thunder of manifold voices  
harmonious and strong,  
One King and one love, and one  
shout of one worshipping throng.

*Before 1893.*

Before the Throne, and before the Lamb.

As the voice of many waters all  
saints sing as one,  
As the voice of an unclouded  
thundering ;  
Unswayed by the changing moon  
and unswayed by the sun,  
As the voice of many waters all  
saints sing.

Circling round the rainbow of  
their perfect ring,  
Twelve thousand times twelve  
thousand voices in unison  
Swell the triumph, swell the praise  
of Christ the King.

Where raiment is white of blood-  
steeped linen slowly spun,  
Where crowns are golden of  
Love's own largessing,  
Where eternally the ecstasy is but  
begun,  
As the voice of many waters all  
saints sing.

*Before 1893.*

He shall go no more out.

ONCE within, within for evermore :  
There the long beatitudes begin :

Overflows the still unwasting store,  
Once within.

Left without are death and doubt  
and sin ;  
All man wrestled with and all he bore,  
Man who saved his life, skin after  
skin.

Blow the trumpet - blast unheard  
before,  
Shout the unheard-of shout for  
these who win,  
These, who cast their crowns on  
Heaven's high floor  
Once within.

*Before 1893.*

YEA, blessed and holy is he that hath  
part in the First Resurrection !  
We mark well his bulwarks, we set  
up his tokens, we gaze, even we,  
On this lustre of God and of Christ,  
this creature of flawless per-  
fection :  
Yea, blessed and holy is he.

But what? an offscouring of earth,  
a wreck from the turbulent sea,  
A bloodstone unflinchingly hewn for  
the Temple's eternal erection,  
One scattered and peeled, one  
sifted and chastened and  
scourged and set free ?

Yea, this is that worshipful stone  
of the Wise Master Builder's  
election,

Yea, this is that King and that  
Priest where all Hallows bow  
down the knee,

Yea, this man set nigh to the Throne  
is Jonathan of David's delection,  
Yea, blessed and holy is he.

*Before 1893.*

THE joy of Saints, like incense  
turned to fire

In golden censers, soars acceptable;  
And high their heavenly hallelujahs swell

Desirous still with still-fulfilled desire.  
Sweet thrill the harpstrings of the  
heavenly choir,

Most sweet their voice while love  
is all they tell;

Where love is all in all, and all  
is well

Because their work is love and love  
their hire.

All robed in white and all with  
palm in hand,

Crowns too they have of gold and  
thrones of gold;

The street is golden which  
their feet have trod,

Or on a sea of glass and fire they  
stand:

And none of them is young, and  
none is old,

Except as perfect by the Will  
of God.

*Before 1893.*

WHAT are these lovely ones, yea,  
what are these?

Lo these are they who for pure  
love of Christ

Stripped off the trammels of soft  
silken ease,

Beggar themselves betimes, to  
be sufficed

Throughout heaven's one eternal  
day of peace:

By golden streets, thro' gates of  
pearl unpriced,

They entered on the joys that will  
not cease,

And found again all firstfruits  
sacrificed.

And wherefore have you harps, and  
wherefore palms,

And wherefore crowns, O ye who  
walk in white?

Because our happy hearts are chant-  
ing psalms,

Endless Te Deum for the ended  
fight;

While thro' the everlasting lapse of  
calms

We cast our crowns before the  
Lamb our Might.

*Before 1893.*

The General Assembly and Church of  
the Firstborn.

BRING me to see, Lord, bring me  
yet to see

Those nations of Thy glory and  
Thy grace

Who splendid in Thy splendour  
worship Thee.

Light in all eyes, content in every  
face,

Raptures and voices one while mani-  
fold,

Love and are well-beloved the  
ransomed race:—

Great mitred priests, great kings in  
crowns of gold,

Patriarchs who head the army of  
their sons,

Matrons and mothers by their own  
extolled,

Wise and most harmless holy little  
ones,

Virgins who, making merry, lead the  
dance,

Full-breathed victorious racers  
from all runs,

Home-comers out of every change  
and chance,

Hermits restored to social neigh-  
bourhood,

Aspects which reproduce One  
 Countenance,  
 Life-losers with their losses all  
 made good,  
 All blessed hungry and athirst  
 sufficed,  
 All who bore crosses round the  
 Holy Rood,  
 Friends, brethren, sisters, of Lord  
 Jesus Christ.

*Before 1893.*

Every one that is perfect shall be as his  
 Master.

How can one man, how can all men,  
 How can we be like St. Paul,  
 Like St. John, or like St. Peter,  
 Like the least of all  
 Blessed Saints? for we are small.

Love can make us like St. Peter,  
 Love can make us like St. Paul,  
 Love can make us like the blessed  
 Bosom friend of all,  
 Great St. John, tho' we are small.

Love which clings and trusts and  
 worships,  
 Love which rises from a fall,  
 Love which, prompting glad obedi-  
 ence,  
 Labours most of all,  
 Love makes great the great and  
 small.

*Before 1886.*

'As dying, and behold we live!'  
 So live the Saints while time is  
 flying;  
 Make all they make, give all they  
 give,  
 As dying;

Bear all they bear without reply-  
 ing;  
 They grieve as tho' they did not  
 grieve,  
 Uplifting praise with prayer and  
 sighing.

Patient thro' life's long-drawn  
 reprieve,  
 Aloof from strife, at peace from  
 crying,  
 The morrow to its day they leave,  
 As dying.

*Before 1893.*

So great a cloud of Witnesses.

I THINK of the saints I have known,  
 and lift up mine eyes  
 To the far-away home of beautiful  
 Paradise,

Where the song of saints gives voice  
 to an undividing sea

On whose plain their feet stand firm  
 while they keep their jubilee.

As the sound of waters their voice,  
 as the sound of thunderings,

While they all at once rejoice, while  
 all sing and while each one  
 sings;

Where more saints flock in, and  
 more, and yet more, and again  
 yet more,

And not one turns back to depart  
 thro' the open entrance-door.

O sights of our lovely earth, O  
 sound of our earthly sea,  
 Speak to me of Paradise, of all  
 blessed saints to me:

Or keep silence touching them, and  
 speak to my heart alone

Of the Saint of saints, the King of  
 kings, the Lamb on the Throne.

*Before 1893.*

OUR Mothers, lovely women pitiful ;  
Our Sisters, gracious in their life  
and death ;

To us each unforgotten memory  
saith :

‘ Learn as we learned in life’s  
sufficient school,

Work as we worked in patience of  
our rule,

Walk as we walked, much less  
by sight than faith, .

Hope as we hoped, despite our  
slips and scathe,

Fearful in joy and confident in  
dule.’

I know not if they see us or can  
see ;

But if they see us in our painful  
day,

How looking back to earth  
from Paradise

Do tears not gather in those  
loving eyes ?—

Ah happy eyes ! whose tears are  
wiped away

Whether or not you bear to look  
on me.

*Before 1893.*

SAFE where I cannot lie yet,

Safe where I hope to lie too,

Safe from the fume and the fret ;

You, and you,

Whom I never forget.

Safe from the frost and the snow,

Safe from the storm and the  
sun,

Safe where the seeds wait to grow

One by one

And to come back in blow.

*Before 1893.*

‘ Is it well with the child ?’

LYING a-dying.

Have done with vain sighing :

Life not lost but treasured,

God Almighty pleased,

God’s daughter fetched and carried,

Christ’s bride betrothed and married.

Our tender little dove

Meek-eyed and simple,

Our love goes home to Love :

There shall she walk in white,

Where God shall be the Light,

And God the Temple.

*3 November 1865.*

DEAR Angels and dear disembodied  
Saints

Unseen around us, worshipping in  
rest,

May wonder that man’s heart so  
often faints,

And his steps lag along the  
heavenly quest,

What while his foolish fancy moulds  
and paints

A fonder hope than all they  
prove for best ;

A lying hope which undermines  
and taints

His soul, as sin and sloth make  
manifest.

Sloth, and a lie, and sin : shall  
these suffice

The unfathomable heart of craving  
man,

That heart which being a deep  
calls to the deep ?

Behold how many like us rose  
and ran

When Christ, Life-giver, roused  
them from their sleep

To rise and run and rest in Paradise !

*Before 1893.*



'To every seed his own body.'

BONE to his bone, grain to his grain of dust :

A numberless reunion shall make whole

Each blessed body for its blessed soul,

Refashioning the aspects of the just.

Each saint who died must live afresh, and must

Ascend resplendent in the aureole

Of his own proper glory to his goal,

As seeds their proper bodies all upthrust.

Each with his own not with another's grace,

Each with his own not with another's heart,

Each with his own not with another's face,

Each dove-like soul mounts to his proper place :—

O faces unforgotten ! if to part

Wrung sore, what will it be to re-embrace ?

*Before 1893.*

What good shall my life do me ?

HAVE dead men long to wait ?—

There is a certain term

For their bodies to the worm

And their souls at heaven gate :

Dust to dust, clod to clod,

These precious things of God,

Trampled underfoot by man

And beast the appointed years.—

Their longest life was but a span

For change and smiles and tears :

Is it worth while to live,

Rejoice and grieve,  
Hope, fear, and die ?

Man with man, truth with lie,

The slow show dwindles by :

At last what shall we have

Besides a grave ?—

Lies and shows no more,

No fear, no pain,

But after hope and sleep

Dear joys again.

Those who sowed shall reap :

Those who bore

The Cross shall wear the Crown ;

Those who clomb the steep

There shall sit down.

The Shepherd of the sheep

Feeds His flock there ;

In watered pastures fair

They rest and leap.

'Is it worth while to live ?'

Be of good cheer :

Love casts out fear :

Rise up, achieve.

*September 1858.*

### THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSETH KNOW- LEDGE

I BORE with thee long weary days  
and nights,

Through many pangs of heart,  
through many tears ;

I bore with thee, thy hardness, cold-  
ness, slights,

For three-and-thirty years.

Who else had dared for thee what I  
have dared ?

I plunged the depth most deep  
from bliss above ;

I not My flesh, I not My spirit  
spared :

Give thou Me love for love.

For thee I thirsted in the daily  
drouth,

For thee I trembled in the nightly  
frost :

Much sweeter thou than honey to  
My mouth :

Why wilt thou still be lost ?

I bore thee on My shoulders and  
rejoiced :

Men only marked upon My  
shoulders borne

The branding cross ; and shouted  
hungry-voiced,

Or wagged their heads in scorn.

Thee did nails grave upon My hands,  
thy name

Did thorns for frontlets stamp  
between Mine eyes :

I, Holy One, put on thy guilt and  
shame ;

I, God, Priest, Sacrifice.

A thief upon My right hand and  
My left ;

Six hours alone, athirst, in misery :

At length in death one smote My  
heart and cleft

A hiding-place for thee.

Nailed to the racking cross, than  
bed of down

More dear, whereon to stretch  
Myself and sleep :

So did I win a kingdom,—Share  
My crown ;

A harvest,—Come and reap.

15 October 1858.

## A SHADOW OF DOROTHEA

‘GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,

Will you pluck me lilies ?

Or will you show me where they  
grow,

Show where the summer rill is ?

But is your hair of gold or light,

And is your foot of flake or fire,

And have you wings rolled up from  
sight,

And joy to slake desire ?’

‘I pluck young flowers of Paradise,  
Lilies and roses red :

A sceptre for my hand,

A crown to crown my golden head.

Love makes me wise :

I sing, I stand,

I pluck palm-branches in the  
sheltered land.’

‘Is there a path to heaven

My heavy foot may tread ?

And will you show that way to go,

That rose and lily bed ?

Which day of all these seven

Will lighten my heart of lead,

Will purge mine eyes and make me  
wise,

Alive or dead ?’

‘There is a heavenward stair—

Mount, strain upwards, strain and  
strain—

Each step will crumble to your foot

That never shall descend again.

There grows a tree from ancient  
root

With healing leaves and twelvefold  
fruit

In musical heaven-air :

Feast with me there.’

'I have a home on earth I cannot  
leave,  
I have a friend on earth I cannot  
grieve :  
Come down to me, I cannot mount  
to you.'  
'Nay, choose between us both,  
Choose as you are lief or loth :  
You cannot keep these things and  
have me too.'

11 November 1858.

#### FOR HENRIETTA POLYDORE

ON the land and on the sea  
Jesus keep both you and me :

Going out and coming in,  
Christ keep us both from shame  
and sin :

In this world, in the world to come,  
Keep us safe and lead us home :

To-day in toil, to-night in rest,  
Be best beloved and love us best.

16 January 1859.

#### ASH WEDNESDAY

JESUS, do I love Thee ?  
Thou art far above me,  
Seated out of sight,  
Hid in heavenly light  
Of most highest height.  
Martyred hosts implore Thee,  
Seraphs fall before Thee,  
Angels and Archangels,  
Cherub throngs adore Thee.  
Blessed she that bore Thee !  
All the saints approve Thee,  
All the virgins love Thee.

I show as a blot  
Blood hath cleansèd not,  
As a barren spot  
In thy fruitful lot ;  
I, fig-tree fruit-unbearing,  
Thou, righteous Judge unsparing :  
What canst Thou do more to me  
That shall not more undo me ?  
Thy Justice hath a sound,  
'Why cumbereth it the ground ?'  
Thy Love with stirrings stronger  
Pleads, 'Give it one year longer.'  
Thou giv'st me time : but who  
Save Thou shall give me dew,  
Shall feed my root with blood  
And stir my sap for good ?—  
Oh by Thy gifts that shame me  
Give more lest they condemn me.  
Good Lord, I ask much of Thee,  
But most I ask to love Thee :  
Kind Lord, be mindful of me,  
Love me and make me love Thee.

21 March 1859.

#### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

BEFORE the paling of the stars,  
Before the winter morn,  
Before the earliest cock-crow  
Jesus Christ was born :  
Born in a stable,  
Cradled in a manger,  
In the world His hands had made  
Born a stranger.

Priest and King lay fast asleep  
In Jerusalem,  
Young and old lay fast asleep  
In crowded Bethlehem :  
Saint and Angel, ox and ass,  
Kept a watch together,  
Before the Christmas daybreak  
In the winter weather.

Jesus on his Mother's breast  
 In the stable cold,  
 Spotless Lamb of God was He,  
 Shepherd of the fold :  
 Let us kneel with Mary Maid,  
 With Joseph bent and hoary,  
 With Saint and Angel, ox and ass,  
 To hail the King of Glory.

26 August 1859.

### CHRIST OUR ALL IN ALL

(From 26 August 1859 to before 1893.)

The ransomed of the Lord.

THY lovely saints do bring Thee love,  
 Incense and joy and gold ;  
 Fair star with star, fair dove with  
 dove,  
 Beloved by Thee of old.

I, Master, neither star nor dove,  
 Have brought Thee sins and  
 tears ;

Yet I too bring a little love  
 Amid my flaws and fears.

A trembling love that faints and  
 fails

Yet still is love of Thee,  
 A wondering love that hopes and  
 hails

Thy boundless Love of me ;  
 Love kindling faith and pure desire,  
 Love following on to bliss,  
 A spark, O Jesu, from Thy fire,  
 A drop from Thine abyss.

Before 1893.

LORD, we are rivers running to Thy  
 sea,

Our waves and ripples all derived  
 from Thee :

A nothing we should have, a nothing  
 be,

Except for Thee.

Sweet are the waters of Thy shore-  
 less sea,  
 Make sweet our waters that make  
 haste to Thee ;  
 Pour in Thy sweetness, that our-  
 selves may be  
 Sweetness to Thee.

Before 1893.

An exceeding bitter cry.

CONTEMPT and pangs and haunting  
 fears—

Too late for hope, too late for ease,  
 Too late for rising from the  
 dead ;

Too late, too late to bend my  
 knees,

Or bow my head,  
 Or weep, or ask for tears.

Hark ! . . . One I hear Who calls  
 to me :

'Give Me thy thorn and grief  
 and scorn,

Give Me thy ruin and regret.  
 Press on thro' darkness toward  
 the morn :

One loves thee yet :  
 Have I forgotten thee ?'

Lord, Who art Thou ? Lord, is it  
 Thou

My Lord and God Lord Jesus  
 Christ ?

How said I that I sat alone  
 And desolate and unsufficed ?  
 Surely a stone

Would raise Thy praises now !

Before 1893.

O LORD, when Thou didst call me,  
 didst Thou know

My heart disheartened thro' and  
 thro',

Still hankering after Egypt full  
in view  
Where cucumbers and melons grow ?  
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

But, Lord, when Thou didst choose  
me, didst Thou know  
How marred I was and withered  
too,  
Nor rose for sweetness nor for  
virtue rue,  
Timid and rash, hasty and slow ?  
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

My Lord, when Thou didst love  
me, didst Thou know  
How weak my efforts were, how  
few,  
Tepid to love and impotent to  
do,  
Envious to reap while slack to sow ?  
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

Good Lord, Who knowest what I  
cannot know,  
And dare not know, my false, my  
true,  
My new, my old ; Good Lord,  
arise and do  
If loving Thou hast known me so.  
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

*Before 1893.*

Thou, God, seest me.

AH me that I should be  
Exposed and open evermore to  
Thee !—

‘Nay, shrink not from My light,  
And I will make thee glorious in  
My sight  
With the overcoming Shulam-  
ite.’—

Yea, Lord, Thou moulding me.

. . . Without a hiding-place  
To hide me from the terrors of Thy  
Face.—

‘Thy hiding-place is here  
In Mine own heart, wherefore  
the Roman spear  
For thy sake I accounted dear.’—  
My Jesus ! King of Grace.

. . . Without a veil, to give  
Whiteness before Thy Face that I  
might live.—

‘Am I too poor to dress  
Thee in My royal robe of  
righteousness ?  
Challenge and prove My Love’s  
excess.’—  
Give, Lord, I will receive.

. . . Without a pool wherein  
To wash my piteous self and make  
me clean.—

‘My Blood hath washed away  
Thy guilt, and still I wash thee  
day by day :  
Only take heed to trust and  
pray.’—  
Lord, help me to begin.

*Before 1893.*

LORD JESUS, who would think that  
I am Thine ?

Ah who would think,  
Who sees me ready to turn back or  
sink,  
That Thou art mine ?

I cannot hold Thee fast tho’ Thou  
art mine :

Hold Thou me fast,  
So earth shall know at last and  
heaven at last  
That I am Thine.

*Before 1886.*

The Name of Jesus.

JESUS, Lord God from all eternity,  
Whom love of us brought down  
to shame,  
I plead Thy Life with Thee,  
I plead Thy Death, I plead Thy  
Name.

Jesus, Lord God of every living soul,  
Thy Love exceeds its uttered fame,  
Thy Will can make us whole,  
I plead Thyself, I plead Thy Name.

*Before 1886.*

LORD God of Hosts, most Holy and  
most High,

What made Thee tell Thy Name  
of Love to me?

What made Thee live our life?  
what made Thee die?

‘My love of thee.’

I pitched so low, Thou so exceeding  
high,

What was it made Thee stoop to  
look at me

While flawless sons of God stood  
wondering by?

‘My love of thee.’

What is there which can lift me up  
on high

That we may dwell together, Thou  
with me,

When sin and death and suffering  
are gone by?

‘My love of thee.’

O Lord, what is that best thing hid  
on high

Which makes heaven heaven as  
Thou hast promised me,

Yea, makes it Christ to live and gain  
to die?

‘My love of thee.’

*Before 1886.*

‘LORD, what have I that I may  
offer Thee?

Look, Lord, I pray Thee, and see.’—

‘What is it thou hast got?

Nay, child, what is it thou hast not?

Thou hast all gifts that I have given  
to thee:

Offer them all to Me,

The great ones and the small;

I will accept them one and all.’—

‘I have a will, good Lord, but it is  
marred;

A heart both crushed and hard:

Not such as these the gift

Clean-handed lovely saints uplift.’—

‘Nay, child, but wilt thou judge for  
Me?

I crave not thine, but thee.’—

‘Ah Lord Who lovest me!

Such as I have now give I Thee.’

*Before 1886.*

IF I should say ‘my heart is in my  
home,’

I turn away from that high halidom  
Where Jesus sits: for nowhere  
else

But with its treasure dwells

The heart: this Truth and this  
experience tells.

If I should say ‘my heart is in a  
grave,’

I turn away from Jesus risen to save:

I slight that death He died for me ;  
I too deny to see  
His beauty and desirability.

O Lord, Whose Heart is deeper than  
my heart,  
Draw mine to Thine to worship  
where Thou art ;  
For Thine own glory join the twain  
Never to part again,  
Nor to have lived nor to have  
died in vain.

*Before 1886.*

LEAF from leaf Christ knows ;  
Himself the Lily and the Rose :

Sheep from sheep Christ tells ;  
Himself the Shepherd, no one else :

Star and star He names,  
Himself outblazing all their flames :

Dove by dove He calls  
To set each on the golden walls :

Drop by drop, He counts  
The flood of ocean as it mounts :

Grain by grain, His hand  
Numbers the innumerable sand.

Lord, I lift to Thee  
In peace what is and what shall be :

Lord, in peace I trust  
To Thee all spirits and all dust.

*Circa 1877.*

LORD, carry me.—Nay, but I grant  
thee strength  
To walk and work thy way to  
Heaven at length.—

Lord, why then am I weak ?—Be-  
cause I give  
Power to the weak, and bid the  
dying live.—

Lord, I am tired.—He hath not  
much desired  
The goal who at the starting-point  
is tired.—

Lord, dost Thou know ?—I know  
what is in man ;  
What the flesh can, and what the  
spirit can.—

Lord, dost Thou care ?—Yea, for  
thy gain or loss  
So much I cared, it brought Me to  
the Cross.—

Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine  
unbelief.—  
Good is the word ; but rise, for life  
is brief.

The follower is not greater than the  
Chief :  
Follow thou Me along My way of  
grief.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, I am here.—But, child, I look  
for thee

Elsewhere and nearer Me.—

Lord, that way moans a wide in-  
satiated sea :

How can I come to Thee ?—

Set foot upon the water, test and see

If thou canst come to Me.—

Couldst Thou not send a boat to  
carry me,

Or dolphin swimming free ?—



Nay, boat nor fish if thy will faileth thee :

For My Will too is free.—

O Lord, I am afraid.—Take hold on Me :

I am stronger than the sea.—

Save, Lord, I perish.—I have hold of thee,

I made and rule the sea,

I bring thee to the haven where thou wouldst be.

*Before 1893.*

NEW creatures ; the Creator still the Same

For ever and for ever : therefore we

Win hope from God's unsearchable decree,

And glorify His still unchanging Name.

We too are still the same ; and still our claim,

Our trust, our stay, is Jesus, none but He :

He still the Same regards us, and still we

Mount toward Him in old love's accustomed flame.

We know Thy wounded Hands : and Thou dost know

Our praying hands, our hands that clasp and cling

To hold Thee fast and not to let Thee go.

All else be new then, Lord, as Thou hast said :

Since it is Thou, we dare not be afraid,

Our King of old and still our Self-same King.

*Before 1893.*

King of kings and Lord of lords.

Is this that Name as ointment poured forth

For which the virgins love Thee—  
King of kings

And Lord of lords ? All Seraphs clad in wings ;

All Cherubs and all Wheels which south and north,

Which east and west turn not in going forth ;

All many-semblanced ordered Spirits, as rings

Of rainbow in unwonted fashionings,

Might answer, Yes. But we from south and north,

From east and west, a feeble folk who came

By desert ways in quest of land unseen,

A promised land of pasture ever green

And ever springing ever singing wave,

Know best Thy Name of Jesus :  
Blessed Name,

Man's life and resurrection from the grave.

*Before 1893.*

THY Name, O Christ, as incense streaming forth

Sweetens our names before God's Holy Face ;

Luring us from the south and from the north

Unto the sacred place.

In Thee God's promise is Amen and Yea.

What art Thou to us ? Prize of every lot,

Shepherd and Door, our Life and  
Truth and Way :—

Nay, Lord, what art Thou not ?

*Before 1893.*

The Good Shepherd.

'O SHEPHERD with the bleeding  
Feet,

Good Shepherd with the pleading  
Voice,

What seekest Thou from hill to  
hill ?

Sweet were the valley pastures, sweet  
The sound of flocks that bleat their  
joys,

And eat and drink at will.

Is one worth seeking, when Thou  
hast of Thine

Ninety and nine ?'

'How should I stay my bleeding  
Feet,

How should I hush my pleading  
Voice ?

I Who chose death and clomb  
a hill,

Accounting gall and wormwood  
sweet,

That hundredfold might bud My  
joys

For love's sake and good will.

I seek My one, for all there bide of  
Mine

Ninety and nine.'

*Before 1893.*

'Rejoice with Me.

LITTLE Lamb, who lost thee ?'—

'I myself, none other.'—

Little Lamb, who found thee ?'—

'Jesus, Shepherd, Brother.

Ah, Lord, what I cost Thee !

Canst Thou still desire ?'—

'Still Mine arms surround thee,  
Still I lift thee higher,  
Draw thee nigher.'

*Before 1893.*

SHALL not the Judge of all the earth  
do right ?

Yea, Lord, altho' Thou say me  
nay.

Shall not His Will be to me life and  
light ?

Yea, Lord, altho' Thou slay.

Yet, Lord, remembering turn and sift  
and see,

Remember tho' Thou sift me thro',  
Remember my desire, remember me,  
Remember, Lord, and do.

*Before 1886.*

ME and my gift : kind Lord, behold,  
Be not extreme to test or sift ;  
Thy Love can turn to fire and gold  
Me and my gift.

Myself and mine to Thee I lift :  
Gather us to Thee from the cold  
Dead outer world where dead  
things drift.

If much were mine, then manifold  
Should be the offering of my thrift :  
I am but poor, yet love makes bold  
Me and my gift.

*Before 1893.*

'He cannot deny Himself.'

LOVE still is Love, and doeth all  
things well,

Whether He show me heaven or hell,  
Or earth in her decay

Passing away

On a day.

Love still is Love, tho' He should  
say 'Depart,'  
And break my incorrigible heart,  
And set me out of sight,  
Widowed of light  
In the night.

Love still is Love, is Love, if He  
should say,  
'Come,' on that uttermost dread  
day ;  
'Come,' unto very me,  
'Come where I be,  
Come and see.'

Love still is Love, whatever comes  
to pass :  
O Only Love, make me Thy glass,  
Thy pleasure to fulfil  
By loving still,  
Come what will.

*Before 1893.*

Slain from the foundation of the world.

SLAIN for man, slain for me, O  
Lamb of God, look down ;  
Loving to the end, look down,  
behold and see :

Turn Thine Eyes of pity, turn not  
on us Thy frown,  
O Lamb of God, slain for man,  
slain for me.

Mark the wrestling, mark the race  
for indeed a crown ;

Mark our chariots how we drive  
them heavily ;

Mark the foe upon our track blasting  
thundering down,

O Lamb of God, slain for man,  
slain for me.

Set as a Cloudy Pillar against them  
Thy frown,  
Thy Face of Light toward us  
gracious utterly ;  
Help granting, hope granting, until  
Thou grant a crown,  
O Lamb of God, slain for man,  
slain for me.

*Before 1893.*

LORD JESU, Thou art sweetness to  
my soul :

I to myself am bitterness :  
Regard my fainting struggle toward  
the goal,  
Regard my manifold distress,  
O Sweet Jesu.

Thou art Thyself my goal, O Lord  
my King :

Stretch forth Thy hand to save  
my soul :

What matters more or less of  
journeying ?

While I touch Thee I touch my  
goal,

O Sweet Jesu.

*Before 1893.*

'I, LORD, Thy foolish sinner low  
and small,

Lack all.

His heart too high was set  
Who asked, What lack I yet ?

Woe's me at my most woeful pass !

I, Lord, who scarcely dare adore,  
Weep sore :

Steeped in this rotten world I fear  
to rot.

Alas what lack I not ?

Alas alas for me ! alas

More and yet more !'—

‘Nay, stand up on thy feet, betaking thee

To Me.

Bring fear; but much more bring

Hope to thy patient King:

What, is My pleasure in thy death?

I loved that youth who little knew

The true

Width of his want, yet worshipped  
with goodwill:

So love I thee, and still

Prolong thy day of grace and breath.

Rise up and do.’—

‘Lord, let me know mine end, and  
certify

When I

Shall die and have to stand

Helpless on Either Hand,

Cut off, cut off, my day of grace.’—

‘Not so: for what is that to thee?

I see

The measure and the number of thy  
day.

Keep patience, tho’ I slay;

Keep patience till thou see My Face.

Follow thou Me.’

*Before 1893.*

‘Because He first loved us.’

‘I WAS hungry, and Thou feddest me;

Yea, Thou gavest drink to slake  
my thirst:

O Lord, what love gift can I offer  
Thee

Who hast loved me first?’—

‘Feed My hungry brethren for My  
sake;

Give them drink, for love of them  
and Me:

Love them as I loved thee, when  
Bread I brake

In pure love of thee.’—

R

‘Yea, Lord, I will serve them by  
Thy grace;

Love Thee, seek Thee, in them;  
wait and pray:

Yet would I love Thyself, Lord,  
face to face,

Heart to heart, one day.’—

‘Let to-day fulfil its daily task,

Fill thy heart and hand to them  
and Me:

To-morrow thou shalt ask, and shalt  
not ask

Half I keep for thee.’

*Before 1893.*

LORD, hast Thou so loved us, and  
will not we

Love Thee with heart and mind  
and strength and soul,

Desiring Thee beyond our glorious  
goal,

Beyond the heaven of heavens  
desiring Thee?

Each saint, all saints cry out: Yea  
me, yea me,

Thou hast desired beyond an  
aureole,

Beyond Thy many Crowns, beyond  
the whole

Ninety and nine unwandering family.  
Souls in green pastures of the watered  
land,

Faint pilgrim souls wayfaring thro’  
the sand,

Abide with Thee and in Thee are  
at rest:

Yet evermore, kind Lord, renew  
Thy quest

After new wanderers; such as once  
— Thy Hand

Gathered, Thy Shoulders bore,  
Thy Heart caressed.

*Before 1893.*

Q

As the dove, which found no rest  
 For the sole of her foot, flew back  
 To the ark her only nest  
 And found safety there ;  
 Because Noah put forth his hand,  
 Drew her in from ruin and wrack,  
 And was more to her than the land  
 And the air :

So my spirit, like that dove,  
 Fleeth away to an ark  
 Where dwelleth a Heart of Love,  
 A Hand pierced to save,  
 Tho' the sun and the moon should  
 fail,  
 Tho' the stars drop into the dark,  
 And my body lay itself pale  
 In a grave.

*Before 1893.*

Thou art Fairer than the children of men.

A ROSE, a lily, and the Face of  
 Christ,  
 Have all our hearts sufficed :  
 For He is Rose of Sharon nobly born,  
 Our Rose without a thorn ;  
 And He is Lily of the Valley, He  
 Most sweet in purity.  
 But when we come to name Him as  
 He is,  
 Godhead, Perfection, Bliss,  
 All tongues fall silent, while pure  
 hearts alone  
 Complete their orison.

*Before 1886.*

' As the Apple Tree among the trees of  
 the wood.'

AS one red rose in a garden where  
 all other roses are white  
 Blossoms alone in its glory,  
 crowned all alone

In a solitude of own sweetness and  
 fragrance of own delight,  
 With loveliness not another's and  
 thorns its own ;  
 As one ruddy sun amid million orbs  
 comely and colourless,  
 Among all others, above all others  
 is known ;  
 As it were alone in the garden, alone  
 in the heavenly place,  
 Chief and centre of all, in fellow-  
 ship yet alone.

*Before 1893.*

NONE other Lamb, none other Name,  
 None other Hope in heaven or  
 earth or sea,  
 None other Hiding-place from guilt  
 and shame,  
 None beside Thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns  
 low,  
 Only my heart's desire cries out in  
 me  
 By the deep thunder of its want and  
 woe,  
 Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life tho' I be dead,  
 Love's Fire Thou art, however  
 cold I be :  
 Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay  
 my head,  
 Nor home, but Thee.

*Before 1893.*

Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend  
 forget not.

FRIENDS, I commend to you the  
 narrow way :  
 Not because I, please God, will  
 walk therein,

But rather for the Love Feast of  
that day,

The exceeding prize which whoso  
will may win.

Earth is half spent and rotting at  
the core,

Here hollow death's heads mock  
us with a grin,

Here heartiest laughter leaves us  
tired and sore.

Men heap up pleasures and en-  
large desire,

Outlive desire, and famished ever-  
more

Consume themselves within the  
undying fire.

Yet not for this God made us : not  
for this

Christ sought us far and near to  
draw us nigher,

Sought us and found and paid our  
penalties.

If one could answer 'Nay' to  
God's command,

Who shall say 'Nay' when Christ  
pleads all He is

For us, and holds us with a  
wounded Hand?

*26 August 1859.*

Surely He hath borne our griefs.

CHRIST'S Heart was wrung for me,  
if mine is sore ;

And if my feet are weary, His  
have bled ;

He had no place wherein to lay  
His Head ;

If I am burdened, He was burdened  
more.

The cup I drink He drank of long  
before ;

He felt the unuttered anguish  
which I dread ;

He hungered Who the hungry  
thousands fed,

And thirsted Who the world's re-  
freshment bore.

If grief be such a looking-glass as  
shows

Christ's Face and man's in some  
sort made alike,

Then grief is pleasure with a  
subtle taste :

Wherefore should any fret or  
faint or haste ?

Grief is not grievous to a soul that  
knows

Christ comes,—and listens for  
that hour to strike.

*Before 1886.*

They toil not neither do they spin.

CLOTHES of the lily, Feeder of the  
sparrow,

Father of the fatherless, dear Lord,  
Tho' Thou set me as a mark against

Thine arrow,

As a prey unto Thy sword,  
As a ploughed-up field beneath Thy

harrow,

As a captive in Thy cord,  
Let that cord be love ; and some

day make my narrow

Hallowed bed according to Thy  
Word. Amen.

*Before 1893.*

DARKNESS and light are both alike  
to Thee :

Therefore to Thee I lift my  
darkened face ;

Upward I look with eyes that fail to  
see,

Athirst for future light and present  
grace.

I trust the Hand of Love I scarcely  
trace.

With breath that fails I cry, Re-  
member me :

Add breath to breath so I may  
run my race

That where Thou art there may Thy  
servant be.

For Thou art gulf and fountain of  
my love,

I unreturning torrent to Thy sea,  
Yea Thou the measureless  
ocean for my rill :

Seeking I find, and finding  
seek Thee still :

And oh that I had wings as hath a  
dove,

Then would I flee away to rest  
with Thee.

*Before 1886.*

‘And now why tarriest thou?’

LORD, grant us grace to mount by  
steps of grace

From grace to grace nearer, my  
God, to Thee ;

Not tarrying for to-morrow,

Lest we lie down in sorrow

And never see

Unveiled Thy Face.

Life is a vapour vanishing in haste ;

Life is a day whose sun grows  
pale to set ;

Life is a stint and sorrow,

One day and not the morrow ;

Precious, while yet

It runs to waste.

Lord, strengthen us ; lest fainting  
by the way

We come not to Thee, we who  
come from far ;

Lord, bring us to that morrow  
Which makes an end of sorrow,  
Where all saints are  
On holyday.

Where all the saints rest who have  
heard Thy call,  
Have risen and striven and now  
rejoice in rest :

Call us too home from sorrow

To rest in Thee to-morrow ;

In Thee our Best,

In Thee our All.

*Before 1893.*

HAVE I not striven, my God, and  
watched and prayed ?

Have I not wrestled<sup>d</sup> in mine  
agony ?

Wherefore still turn Thy Face of  
Grace from me ?

Is Thine Arm shortened that Thou  
canst not aid ?

Thy silence breaks my heart : speak  
tho' to upbraid,

For Thy rebuke yet bids us follow  
Thee.

I grope and grasp not ; gaze, but  
cannot see.

When out of sight and reach my  
bed is made,

And piteous men and women cease  
to blame,

Whispering and wistful of my  
gain or loss ;

Thou Who for my sake once  
didst feel the Cross,

Lord, wilt Thou turn and look  
upon me then,

And in Thy Glory bring to nought  
my shame,

Confessing me to angels and to  
men ?

*30 September 1863.*



God is our Hope and Strength.

TEMPEST and terror below ; but  
Christ the Almighty above.

Tho' the depth of the deep over-  
flow, tho' fire run along on the  
ground,

Tho' all billows and flames make a  
noise,—and where is an Ark  
for the dove?—

Tho' sorrows rejoice against joys,  
and death and destruction  
abound :

Yet Jesus abolisheth death, and  
Jesus Who loves us we love ;

His dead are renewed with a  
breath, His lost are the sought  
and the found.

Thy wanderers call and recall, Thy  
dead men lift out of the ground ;

O Jesus, Who lovest us all, stoop  
low from Thy Glory above :

Where sin hath abounded make  
grace to abound and to super-  
abound,

Till we gaze on Thee face unto Face,  
and respond to Thee love unto  
Love.

*Before 1893.*

DAY and night the Accuser makes  
no pause,

Day and night protest the Righteous  
Laws,

Good and Evil witness to man's  
flaws ;

Man the culprit, man's the ruined  
cause,

Man midway to death's devouring  
jaws

And the worm that gnaws.

Day and night our Jesus makes no  
pause,

Pleads His own fulfilment of all laws,  
Veils with His Perfections mortal  
flaws,

Clears the culprit, pleads the  
desperate cause,

Plucks the dead from death's de-  
vouring jaws

And the worm that gnaws.

*Before 1893.*

O MINE enemy

Rejoice not over me !

Jesus waiteth to be gracious :

I will yet arise,

Mounting free and far,

Past sun and star,

To a house prepared and spacious  
In the skies.

Lord, for Thine own sake

Kindle my heart and break ;

Make mine anguish efficacious

Wedded to Thine own :

Be not Thy dear pain,

Thy Love, in vain,

Thou Who waitest to be gracious

On Thy Throne.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, dost Thou look on me, and  
will not I

Launch out my heart to Heaven  
to look on Thee ?

Here if one loved me I should  
turn to see,

And often think on him and often  
sigh,

And by a tender friendship make  
reply

To love gratuitous poured forth  
on me,

And nurse a hope of happy days  
to be,

And mean 'until we meet' in each  
good-bye.

Lord, Thou dost look and love is in  
Thine Eyes,

Thy heart is set upon me day  
and night,

Thou stoopest low to set me  
far above :

O Lord, that I may love Thee make  
me wise ;

That I may see and love Thee  
grant me sight ;

And give me love that I may  
give Thee love.

*Before 1893.*

Peace I leave with you.

TUMULT and turmoil, trouble and  
toil,

Yet peace withal in a painful  
heart ;

Never a grudge and never a broil,  
And ever the better part.

O my King and my heart's own  
choice,

Stretch Thy Hand to Thy flutter-  
ing dove ;

Teach me, call to me with Thy  
Voice,

Wrap me up in Thy Love.

*Before 1893.*

O CHRIST our All in each, our All  
in all !

Others have this or that, a love,  
a friend,

A trusted teacher, a long-worked-  
for end :

But what to me were Peter or were  
Paul

Without Thee ? fame or friend if  
such might be ?

Thee wholly will I love, Thee  
wholly seek,

Follow Thy foot-track, hearken for  
Thy call.

O Christ mine All in all, my  
flesh is weak,

A trembling fawning tyrant unto  
me :

Turn, look upon me, let me  
hear Thee speak :

Tho' bitter billows of Thine  
utmost sea

Swathe me, and darkness build  
around its wall,

Yet will I rise, Thou lifting when I  
fall,

And if Thou hold me fast, yet  
cleave to Thee.

*Before 1886.*

BECAUSE Thy Love hath sought  
me,

All mine is Thine and Thine is  
mine :

Because Thy Blood hath bought  
me,

I will not be mine own but Thine.

I lift my heart to Thy Heart,

Thy Heart sole resting-place for  
mine :

Shall Thy Heart crave for my heart,  
And shall not mine crave back  
for Thine ?

*Before 1893.*

THY fainting spouse, yet still Thy  
spouse ;

Thy trembling dove, yet still Thy  
dove ;

Thine own by mutual vows,  
By mutual love.

Recall Thy vows, if not her vows ;  
 Recall Thy Love, if not her love :  
 For weak she is, Thy spouse,  
 And tired, Thy dove.

*Before 1893.*

Like as the hart desireth the water brooks.

My heart is yearning :  
 Behold my yearning heart,  
 And lean low to satisfy  
 Its lonely beseeching cry,  
 For Thou its fulness art.

Turn, as once turning  
 Thou didst behold Thy Saint  
 In deadly extremity ;  
 Didst look, and win back to  
 Thee  
 His will frightened and faint.

Kindle my burning  
 From Thine unkindled Fire ;  
 Fill me with gifts and with  
 grace  
 That I may behold Thy Face,  
 For Thee I desire.

My heart is yearning,  
 Yearning and thrilling thro'  
 For Thy Love mine own of  
 old,  
 For Thy Love unknown, un-  
 told,  
 Ever old, ever new.

*Before 1893.*

That where I am, there ye may be also.

How know I that it looms lovely  
 that land I have never seen,  
 With morning-glories and heartsease  
 and unexampled green,  
 With neither heat nor cold in the  
 balm-redolent air ?

Some of this, not all, I know ;  
 but this is so ;  
 Christ is there.

How know I that blessedness befalls  
 who dwell in Paradise,  
 The outwearied hearts refreshing,  
 rekindling the worn-out eyes,  
 All souls singing, seeing, rejoicing  
 everywhere ?

Nay, much more than this I  
 know ; for this is so ;  
 Christ is there.

O Lord Christ, Whom having not  
 seen I love and desire to  
 love,

O Lord Christ, Who lookest on me  
 uncomely yet still Thy dove,  
 Take me to Thee in Paradise, Thine  
 own made fair ;

For whatever else I know, this  
 thing is so ;  
 Thou art there.

*Before 1893.*

Judge not according to the appearance.

LORD, purge our eyes to see  
 Within the seed a tree,  
 Within the glowing egg a bird,  
 Within the shroud a butterfly :

Till taught by such, we see  
 Beyond all creatures Thee,  
 And hearken for Thy tender  
 word,

And hear it, 'Fear not : it is I.'

*Before 1893.*

My God, wilt Thou accept, and will  
 not we

Give aught to Thee ?

The kept we lose, the offered we  
 retain

'Or find again.

Yet if our gift were lost, we well  
might lose

All for Thy use :

Well lost for Thee Whose love is  
all for us

Gratuitous.

*Before 1893.*

A CHILL blank world. Yet over  
the utmost sea

The light of a coming dawn is  
rising to me,

No more than a paler shade of  
darkness as yet ;

While I lift my heart, O Lord, my  
heart unto Thee

Who hast not forgotten me, yea,  
Who wilt not forget.

Forget not Thy sorrowful servant,  
O Lord my God,

Weak as I cry, faint as I cry under-  
neath Thy rod,

Soon to lie dumb before Thee a  
body devoid of breath,

Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, a sod  
to the sod :

Forget not my life, O my Lord,  
forget not my death.

*Before 1893.*

The Chiefest among ten thousand.

O JESU, better than Thy gifts  
Art Thou Thine only Self to us !  
Palm branch its triumph, harp uplifts  
Its triumph-note melodious :

But what are such to such as we ?

O Jesu, better than Thy saints  
Art Thou Thine only Self to us !  
The heart faints and the spirit faints  
For only Thee all-Glorious,

For Thee, O only Lord, for  
Thee.

*Before 1893.*

## EASTER EVEN

THERE is nothing more that they  
can do

For all their rage and boast :

Caiaphas with his blaspheming  
crew,

Herod with his host ;

Pontius Pilate in his judgment hall

Judging their Judge and his,

Or he who led them all and passed  
them all,

Arch-Judas with his kiss.

The sepulchre made sure with  
ponderous stone,

Seal that same stone, O priest :

It may be thou shalt block the  
Holy One

From rising in the east.

Set a watch about the sepulchre

To watch on pain of death :

They must hold fast the stone if  
One should stir

And shake it from beneath.

God Almighty, He can break a seal,

And roll away a stone :

Can grind the proud in dust who  
would not kneel,

And crush the mighty one.

There is nothing more that they  
can do

For all their passionate care,

Those who sit in dust, the blessed  
few,

And weep and rend their hair—

Peter, Thomas, Mary Magdalen,

The Virgin unreprieved,

Joseph and Nicodemus foremost  
men,

And John the well-beloved.

Bring your finest linen and your  
spice,

Swathe the sacred Dead,  
Bind with careful hands and piteous  
eyes

The napkin round His head :

Lay Him in the garden-rock to rest :  
Rest you the Sabbath length :

The Sun that went down crimson in  
the west

Shall rise renewed in strength.

God Almighty shall give joy for  
pain,

Shall comfort him who grieves :

Lo He with joy shall doubtless come  
again

And with Him bring His sheaves.

23 March 1861.

### THE OFFERING OF THE NEW LAW

ONCE I thought to sit so high  
In the palace of the sky :  
Now I thank God for His grace  
If I may fill the lowest place.

Once I thought to scale so soon  
Heights above the changing moon :  
Now I thank God for delay :—  
To-day : it yet is called to-day.

While I stumble, halt and blind,  
Lo He waiteth to be kind :  
Bless me soon or bless me slow—  
Except He bless I let not go.

Once for earth I laid my plan,  
Once I leaned on strength of man :  
When my hope was swept aside  
I stayed my broken heart on pride :

Broken reed hath pierced my hand,  
Fell my house I built on sand,  
Roofless, wounded, maimed by sin,  
Fightings without and fears within.

Yet, His tree, He feeds my root :  
Yet, His branch, He prunes for fruit :  
Yet, His sheep, these eves and  
morns  
He seeks for me among the thorns.

With Thine Image stamped of old,  
Find Thy coin more choice than  
gold :

Known to Thee by name, recall  
To Thee Thy homesick prodigal.

Sacrifice and offering  
None there is that I can bring—  
None save what is Thine alone :  
I bring Thee, Lord, but of Thine  
own.

Broken Body, Blood outpoured,  
These I bring, my God, my Lord ;  
Wine of Life and Living Bread,  
With these for me Thy board is  
spread.

23 May 1861.

### BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

By the waters of Babylon  
We sit down and weep,  
Far from the pleasant land  
Where our fathers sleep :  
Far from our Holy Place  
From which the Glory is gone :  
We sit in dust and weep  
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon  
The willow-trees grow rank :

We hang our harps thereon  
 Silent upon the bank.  
 Before us the days are dark,  
 And dark the days that are gone :  
 We grope in the very dark  
 By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon  
 We thirst for Jordan yet,  
 We pine for Jerusalem  
 Whereon our hearts are set :  
 Our priests defiled and slain,  
 Our princes ashamed and gone,  
 Oh how should we forget  
 By the waters of Babylon ?

By the waters of Babylon  
 Though the wicked grind the just,  
 Our seed shall yet strike root  
 And shall shoot up from the dust :  
 The captive shall lead captive,  
 The slave rise up and begone,  
 And thou too shalt sit in dust,  
 O daughter of Babylon.

1 December 1861.

### WITHIN THE VEIL

SHE holds a lily in her hand,  
 Where long ranks of Angels stand :  
 A silver lily for her wand.

All her hair falls sweeping down,  
 Her hair that is a golden brown,  
 A crown beneath her golden crown.

Blooms a rose-bush at her knee,  
 Good to smell and good to see :  
 It bears a rose for her, for me :

Her rose a blossom richly grown,  
 My rose a bud not fully blown  
 But sure one day to be mine own.

13 December 1861.

### GOOD FRIDAY

AM I a stone, and not a sheep,  
 That I can stand, O Christ,  
 beneath Thy cross,  
 To number drop by drop Thy  
 Blood's slow loss,  
 And yet not weep ?

Not so those women loved  
 Who with exceeding grief la-  
 mented Thee ;  
 Not so fallen Peter weeping  
 bitterly ;  
 Not so the thief was moved ;

Not so the Sun and Moon  
 Which hid their faces in a star-  
 less sky,  
 A horror of great darkness at broad  
 noon—  
 I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,  
 But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd  
 of the flock ;  
 Greater than Moses, turn and look  
 once more  
 And smite a rock.

20 April 1862.

### ✓ OUT OF THE DEEP

HAVE mercy, Thou my God—mercy,  
 my God !

For I can hardly bear life day by  
 day.

Be I here or there, I fret myself  
 away :

Lo for Thy staff I have but felt Thy  
 rod

Along this tedious desert-path long  
 trod.

When will Thy judgment judge  
me, yea or nay?

I pray for grace: but then my  
sins unpray

My prayer: on holy ground I fool  
stand shod—

While still Thou haunt'st me, faint  
upon the cross,

A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy  
look,

Unutterable craving for my  
soul.

All-faithful Thou, Lord: I, not  
Thou, forsook

Myself: I traitor slunk back  
from the goal:

Lord, I repent—help Thou my  
helpless loss.

17 December 1862.

### FOR A MERCY RECEIVED

THANK God who spared me what  
I feared!

Once more I gird myself to run.

Thy promise stands, Thou Faith-  
ful One.

Horror of darkness disappeared

At length: once more I see the  
sun,

And dare to wait in hope for Spring,  
To face and bear the Winter's  
cold:

The dead cocoon shall yet unfold  
And give to light the living wing:  
There's hidden sap beneath the  
mould.

My God, how could my courage  
flag

So long as Thou art still the  
same?

For what were labour, failure,  
shame,

Whilst Thy sure promise doth not  
lag,

And Thou dost shield me with  
Thy Name?

Yet am I weak, my faith is weak,  
My heart is weak that pleads with  
Thee:

O Thou that art not far to seek,  
Turn to me, hearken when I speak,  
Stretch forth Thy hand to succour  
me.

Through many perils have I past,  
Deaths, plagues, and wonders,  
have I seen:

Till now Thy hand hath held me  
fast:

Lord, help me, hold me, to the last:  
Still be what Thou hast always  
been.

Open Thy Heart of Love to me,  
Give me Thyself, keep nothing  
back,

Even as I give myself to Thee.  
Love paid by love doth nothing  
lack,

And Love to pay love is not slack.

Love doth so grace and dignify  
That beggars sue as king with  
king

Before the Throne of Grace on high:  
My God, be gracious to my cry:

My God, accept what gift I  
bring:—

A heart that loves: though soiled  
and bruised,

Yet chosen by Thee in time of  
yore.



Who ever came and was refused  
By thee? Do, Lord, as Thou art  
used  
To do, and make me love Thee  
more.

13 January 1863.

### MARTYRS' SONG

WE meet in joy, though we part in  
sorrow ;  
We part to-night, but we meet  
to-morrow.  
Be it flood or blood the path that's  
trod,  
All the same it leads home to God :  
Be it furnace-fire voluminous,  
One like God's Son will walk with  
us.

What are these that glow from afar,  
These that lean over the golden bar,  
Strong as the lion, pure as the dove,  
With open arms and hearts of love ?  
They the blessed ones gone before,  
They the blessed for evermore.  
Out of great tribulation they went  
Home to their home of Heaven-  
content ;  
Through flood or blood or furnace-  
fire,  
To the rest that fulfils desire.

What are these that fly as a cloud,  
With flashing heads and faces bowed,  
In their mouths a victorious psalm,  
In their hands a robe and a palm ?  
Welcoming angels these that shine,  
Your own angel, and yours, and  
mine ;

Who have hedged us both day and  
night  
On the left hand and on the right,

Who have watched us both night  
and day  
Because the devil keeps watch to  
slay.

Light above light, and Bliss beyond  
bliss,  
Whom words cannot utter, lo Who is  
This ?

As a King with many crowns He  
stands,  
And our names are graven upon His  
hands :

As a Priest, with God-uplifted eyes,  
He offers for us His Sacrifice ;  
As the Lamb of God for sinners  
slain,

That we too may live He lives  
again ;  
As our Champion behold Him stand,  
Strong to save us, at God's Right  
Hand.

God the Father give us grace  
To walk in the light of Jesus' Face :  
God the Son give us a part  
In the hiding-place of Jesus' Heart :  
God the Spirit so hold us up  
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

Death is short, and life is long ;  
Satan is strong, but Christ more  
strong.

At His Word Who hath led us  
hither

The Red Sea must part hither and  
thither.

At His Word Who goes before us  
too

Jordan must cleave to let us through.

Yet one pang searching and sore,  
And then Heaven for evermore :  
Yet one moment awful and dark,

Then safety within the Veil and the  
Ark ;  
Yet one effort by Christ His grace,  
Then Christ for ever face to face.

God the Father we will adore,  
In Jesus' Name, now and evermore :  
God the Son we will love and thank  
In this flood and on the farther bank ;  
God the Holy Ghost we will praise,  
In Jesus' Name through endless  
days :

God Almighty, God Three in One,  
God Almighty, God alone.

20 March 1863.

### CONSIDER

#### CONSIDER

The lilies of the field whose bloom  
is brief :

We are as they ;

Like them we fade away

As doth a leaf.

#### Consider

The sparrows of the air of small  
account ;

Our God doth view

Whether they fall or mount,—

He guards us too.

#### Consider

The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,  
Yet are most fair :—

What profits all this care

And all this coil ?

#### Consider

The birds that have no barn nor  
harvest-weeks ;

God gives them food :—

Much more our Father seeks

To do us good.

7 May 1863.

### THE LOWEST PLACE

GIVE me the lowest place ; not that  
I dare

Ask for that lowest place, but

Thou hast died

That I might live and share

Thy glory by Thy side.

Give me the lowest place : or if for  
me

That lowest place too high, make  
one more low

Where I may sit and see

My God and love Thee so.

25 July 1863.

### COME UNTO ME

OH for the time gone by when  
thought of Christ

Made His yoke easy and His  
burden light !

When my heart stirred within me  
at the sight

Of altar spread for awful Eucharist :  
When all my hopes His promises  
sufficed :

When my soul watched for Him,  
by day, by night :

When my lamp lightened and  
my robe was white,

And all seemed loss except the  
pearl unpriced.

Yet, since He calls me still with  
tender call,

Since He remembers whom I  
half forgot,

I even will run my race and bear  
my lot :

For Faith the walls of Jericho cast  
down,

And Hope to whoso runs holds  
 forth a crown,  
 And Love is Christ, and Christ is  
 all in all.

23 February 1864.

### WHO SHALL DELIVER ME ?

GOD strengthen me to bear myself ;  
 That heaviest weight of all to bear,  
 Inalienable weight of care.

All others are outside myself ;  
 I lock my door and bar them out,  
 The turmoil, tedium, gad-about.

I lock my door upon myself,  
 And bar them out ; but who shall  
 wall  
 Self from myself, most loathed of  
 all ?

If I could once lay down myself,  
 And start self-purged upon the race  
 That all must run ! Death runs  
 apace.

If I could set aside myself,  
 And start with lightened heart upon  
 The road by all men overgone !

God harden me against myself,  
 This coward with pathetic voice  
 Who craves for ease, and rest, and  
 joys :

Myself, arch-traitor to myself ;  
 My hollowest friend, my deadliest  
 foe,  
 My clog whatever road I go.

Yet One there is can curb myself,  
 Can roll the strangling load from  
 me,  
 Break off the yoke and set me free.

1 March 1864.

### IN PATIENCE

I WILL not faint, but trust in God  
 Who this my lot hath given :  
 He leads me by the thorny road  
 Which is the road to heaven.

Though sad my day that lasts so long,  
 At evening I shall have a song :  
 Though dim my day until the night,  
 At evening-time there shall be light.

My life is but a working day  
 Whose tasks are set aright :  
 A while to work, a while to pray,  
 And then a quiet night.  
 And then, please God, a quiet night  
 Where Saints and Angels walk in  
 white :  
 One dreamless sleep from work and  
 sorrow,  
 But re-awakening on the morrow.

19 March 1864.

### NONE WITH HIM

MY God, to live : how didst Thou  
 bear to live,  
 Preaching and teaching, toiling  
 to and fro ?

Few men accepting what Thou  
 hadst to give,  
 Few men prepared to know  
 Thy Face, to see the truth Thou  
 cam'st to show.

My God, to die : how didst Thou  
 bear to die  
 That long slow death in weariness  
 of pain ?

A curse and an astonishment, past  
 by,  
 Pointed at, mocked again,  
 By men for whom Thy blood was  
 shed in vain.

Whilst I do hardly bear my easy  
life,  
And hardly face my easy-coming  
death :

I turn to flee before the tug of  
strife ;

And shrink with troubled breath  
From sleep, that is not death,  
Thy Spirit saith.

14 June 1864.

# BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

B.C. 570

HERE, where I dwell, I waste to  
skin and bone ;

The curse is come upon me, and  
I waste

In penal torment powerless to  
atone.

The curse is come on me, which  
makes no haste

And doth not tarry, crushing both  
the proud

Hard man and him the sinner  
double-faced.

Look not upon me, for my soul is  
bowed

Within me, as my body in this  
mire ;

My soul crawls dumb-struck, sore  
bestead and cowed.

As Sodom and Gomorrah scourged  
by fire,

As Jericho before God's trumpet-  
peal,

So we the elect ones perish in  
His ire.

Vainly we gird on sackcloth, vainly  
kneel

With famished faces toward Jeru-  
salem :

His heart is shut against us not  
to feel,

His ears against our cry He shutteth  
them,

His hand He shorteneth that He  
will not save,

His law is loud against us to  
condemn :

And we, as unclean bodies in the  
grave

Inheriting corruption and the dark,  
Are outcast from His presence  
which we crave.

Our Mercy hath departed from His  
Ark,

Our Glory hath departed from  
His rest,

Our Shield hath left us naked as  
a mark

Unto all pitiless eyes made manifest.

Our very Father hath forsaken us,

Our God hath cast us from Him :  
we oppress'd

Unto our foes are even marvellous,

A hissing and a butt for pointing  
hands,

Whilst God Almighty hunts and  
grinds us thus ;

For He hath scattered us in alien  
lands,

Our priests, our princes, our  
anointed king,

And bound us hand and foot with  
brazen bands.

Here while I sit my painful heart  
takes wing

Home to the home-land I may see  
no more,

Where milk and honey flow,  
where waters spring

And fail not, where I dwelt in days  
of yore

Under my fig-tree and my fruitful  
vine,

There where my parents dwelt at  
 ease before :  
 Now strangers press the olives that  
 are mine,  
 Reap all the corners of my harvest-  
 field,  
 And make their fat hearts wanton  
 with my wine.  
 To them my trees, to them my  
 gardens yield  
 Their sweets and spices and their  
 tender green,  
 O'er them in noontide heat out-  
 spread their shield.  
 Yet these are they whose fathers  
 had not been  
 Housed with my dogs, whom hip  
 and thigh we smote  
 And with their blood washed their  
 pollutions clean,  
 Purging the land which spewed them  
 from its throat ;  
 Their daughters took we for a  
 pleasant prey,  
 Choice tender ones on whom the  
 fathers doat.  
 Now they in turn have led our own  
 away ;  
 Our daughters and our sisters and  
 our wives  
 Sore weeping as they weep who  
 curse the day,  
 To live, remote from help, dis-  
 honoured lives,  
 Soothing their drunken masters  
 with a song,  
 Or dancing in their golden tinkling  
 gyves :  
 Accurst if they remember through  
 the long  
 Estrangement of their exile, twice  
 accurst  
 If they forget and join the ac-  
 cursed throng.

How doth my heart that is so wrung  
 not burst  
 When I remember that my way  
 was plain,  
 And that God's candle lit me at  
 the first,  
 Whilst now I grope in darkness,  
 grope in vain,  
 Desiring but to find Him Who is  
 lost,  
 To find Him once again, but once  
 again !  
 His wrath came on us to the utter-  
 most,  
 His covenanted and most righteous  
 wrath :  
 Yet this is He of Whom we made  
 our boast,  
 Who lit the Fiery Pillar in our path,  
 Who swept the Red Sea dry before  
 our feet,  
 Who in His jealousy smote kings,  
 and hath  
 Sworn once to David : One shall fill  
 thy seat  
 Born of thy body, as the sun and  
 moon  
 Stablished for aye in sovereignty  
 complete.  
 O Lord, remember David, and that  
 soon.  
 The Glory hath departed, Ichabod !  
 Yet now, before our sun grow  
 dark at noon,  
 Before we come to nought beneath  
 Thy rod,  
 Before we go down quick into the  
 pit,  
 Remember us for good, O God  
 our God :—  
 Thy Name will I remember, praising  
 it,  
 Though Thou forget me, though  
 Thou hide Thy face,

And blot me from the Book which  
 Thou hast writ,  
 Thy Name will I remember in my  
 praise  
 And call to mind Thy faithfulness  
 of old,  
 Though as a weaver Thou cut off  
 my days  
 And end me as a tale ends that  
 is told.

29 June 1864.

### DESPISED AND REJECTED

My sun has set, I dwell  
 In darkness as a dead man out of  
 sight ;  
 And none remains, not one, that I  
 should tell  
 To him mine evil plight  
 This bitter night.  
 I will make fast my door  
 That hollow friends may trouble me  
 no more.

‘Friend, open to Me.’—‘Who is  
 this that calls?’

Nay, I am deaf as are my walls :  
 Cease crying, for I will not hear  
 Thy cry of hope or fear.  
 Others were dear,  
 Others forsook me : what art thou  
 indeed  
 That I should heed  
 Thy lamentable need ?  
 Hungry should feed,  
 Or stranger lodge thee here ?’

‘Friend, My Feet bleed.  
 Open thy door to Me and comfort  
 Me.’

‘I will not open, trouble me no more.  
 Go on thy way footsore,  
 I will not rise and open unto thee.’

R

‘Then is it nothing to thee ? Open,  
 see

Who stands to plead with thee.  
 Open, lest I should pass thee by,  
 and thou

One day entreat my Face  
 And howl for grace,  
 And I be deaf as thou art now.  
 Open to Me.’

Then I cried out upon him : ‘Cease,  
 Leave me in peace :

Fear not that I should crave  
 Aught thou mayst have.

Leave me in peace, yea trouble me  
 no more,

Lest I arise and chase thee from my  
 door.

What, shall I not be let  
 Alone, that thou dost vex me yet ?’

But all night long that voice spake  
 urgently,

‘Open to Me.’

Still harping in mine ears :

‘Rise, let Me in.’

Pleading with tears :

‘Open to Me, that I may come to  
 thee.’

While the dew dropped, while the  
 dark hours were cold :

‘My Feet bleed, see My Face,  
 See My Hands bleed that bring thee  
 grace,

My Heart doth bleed for thee,—  
 Open to Me.’

So till the break of day :

Then died away  
 That voice, in silence as of sorrow ;  
 Then footsteps echoing like a sigh  
 Passed me by,  
 Lingering footsteps slow to pass.

R

On the morrow  
 I saw upon the grass  
 Each footprint marked in blood, and  
     on my door  
 The mark of blood for evermore.

10 October 1864.

### WEARY IN WELL-DOING

I WOULD have gone ; God bade me  
     stay :

I would have worked ; God bade me  
     rest.

He broke my will from day to day ;  
 He read my yearnings unexpressed,  
 And said them nay.

Now I would stay ; God bids me go :  
 Now I would rest ; God bids me  
     work.

He breaks my heart tost to and fro ;  
 My soul is wrung with doubts that  
     lurk  
 And vex it so.

I go, Lord, where Thou sendest  
     me ;

Day after day I plod and moil :  
 But, Christ my God, when will it be  
 That I may let alone my toil  
 And rest with Thee ?

22 October 1864.

### BIRDS OF PARADISE

GOLDEN-WINGED, silver-winged,  
 Winged with flashing flame,  
 Such a flight of birds I saw,  
 Birds without a name :  
 Singing songs in their own tongue—  
 Song of songs—they came.

One to another calling,  
     Each answering each,  
 One to another calling  
 In their proper speech :  
 High above my head they wheeled,  
     Far out of reach.

On wings of flame they went and  
     came

With a cadenced clang :  
 Their silver wings tinkled,  
 Their golden wings rang ;  
 The wind it whistled through their  
     wings

Where in heaven they sang.

They flashed and they darted  
 Awhile before mine eyes,  
 Mounting, mounting, mounting still,  
 In haste to scale the skies,  
 Birds without a nest on earth,  
 Birds of Paradise.

Where the moon riseth not  
 Nor sun seeks the west,  
 There to sing their glory  
 Which they sing at rest,  
 There to sing their love-song  
 When they sing their best :—

Not in any garden  
 That mortal foot hath trod,  
 Not in any flowering tree  
 That springs from earthly sod,  
 But in the garden where they dwell,  
 The Paradise of God.

14 November 1864.

### DOST THOU NOT CARE ?

'I LOVE and love not: Lord, it breaks  
     my heart  
 To love and not to love.  
 Thou veiled within Thy glory, gone  
     apart  
 Into Thy shrine which is above,



Dost Thou not love me, Lord, or care  
For this mine ill? '—

'I love thee here or there,  
I will accept thy broken heart—  
lie still.'

'Lord, it was well with me in time  
gone by

That cometh not again,  
When I was fresh and cheerful, who  
but I?

I fresh, I cheerful: worn with pain  
Now, out of sight and out of heart;  
O Lord, how long?'—

'I watch thee as thou art,  
I will accept thy fainting heart—  
be strong.'

'Lie still, be strong, to-day: but,  
Lord, to-morrow,

What of to-morrow, Lord?  
Shall there be rest from toil, be truce  
from sorrow,

Be living green upon the sward,  
Now but a barren grave to me,  
Be joy for sorrow?'—

'Did I not die for thee?  
Do I not live for thee? Leave  
Me to-morrow.'

24 December 1864.

## I KNOW YOU NOT

O CHRIST, the Vine with living fruit,  
The twelvefold-fruited Tree of Life,  
The Balm in Gilead after strife,  
The Valley-lily and the Rose;  
Stronger than Lebanon Thou Root;  
Sweeter than clustered grapes Thou  
Vine;

O best, Thou Vineyard of red wine,  
Keeping Thy best wine till the  
close.

Pearl of great price Thyself alone,  
And ruddier than the ruby, Thou;  
Most precious lightening Jasper  
stone,

Head of the corner spurned before:  
Fair gate of pearl, Thyself the Door;  
Clear golden street, Thyself the Way;  
By Thee we journey toward Thee  
now,

Through Thee shall enter heaven one  
day.

I thirst for Thee, full fount and flood;  
My heart calls thine, as deep to  
deep:

Dost Thou forget Thy sweat  
and pain,

Thy provocation on the cross?  
Heart-pierced for me, vouchsafe to  
keep

The purchase of Thy lavished Blood:  
The gain is Thine, Lord, if I gain;  
Or, if I lose, Thine own the  
loss.

At midnight, saith the Parable,  
A cry was made, the Bridegroom  
came;

Those who were ready entered  
in:

The rest, shut out in death and  
shame,  
Strove all too late that feast to  
win,

Their die was cast and fixed their  
lot;

A gulf divided heaven from hell;  
The Bridegroom said—I know you  
not.

But Who is this that shuts the door,  
And saith—I know you not—to  
them?

I see the wounded hands and  
side,

The brow thorn-tortured long ago :  
 Yea, This who grieved and bled and died,  
 This same is He who must condemn ;  
 He called, but they refused to know ;  
 So now He hears their cry no more.  
*Circa 1864.*

## IF ONLY

IF only I might love my God and die !—  
 But now He bids me love Him and live on,  
 Now when the bloom of all my life is gone,  
 The pleasant half of life has quite gone by.  
 My tree of hope is lapt that spread so high;  
 And I forget how summer glowed and shone,  
 While autumn grips me with its fingers wan,  
 And frets me with its fitful windy sigh.  
 When autumn passes then must winter numb,  
 And winter may not pass a weary while.  
 But when it passes spring shall flower again :  
 And in that spring who weepeth now shall smile—  
 Yea, they shall wax who now are on the wane,  
 Yea, they shall sing for love when Christ shall come.

*20 February 1865.*

## LONG BARREN

THOU who didst hang upon a barren tree,  
 My God, for me ;  
 Though I till now be barren, now at length,  
 Lord, give me strength  
 To bring forth fruit to Thee.

Thou who didst bear for me the crown of thorn,  
 Spitting and scorn ;  
 Though I till now have put forth thorns, yet now  
 Strengthen me Thou  
 That better fruit be borne.

Thou Rose of Sharon, Cedar of broad roots,  
 Vine of sweet fruits,  
 Thou Lily of the vale with fadeless leaf,  
 Of thousands Chief,  
 Feed Thou my feeble shoots.

*21 February 1865.*

## YOUNG DEATH

LYING a-dying—  
 Such sweet things untasted,  
 Such rare beauties wasted :  
 Her hair a hidden treasure,  
 Her voice a lost pleasure :  
 Her soul made void of passion,  
 Her body going to nothing  
 Though long it took to fashion,  
 Soon to be a loathing.  
 Her road hath no turning,  
 Her light is burning burning  
 With last feeble flashes,  
 Dying from the birth :

Dust to dust, earth to earth,  
Ashes to ashes.

Lo in the room, the upper,  
She shall sit down to supper,  
New-bathed from head to feet  
And on Christ gazing :  
Her mouth kept clean and sweet  
Shall laugh and sing, God praising.  
Then shall be no more weeping :

Or fear or sorrow,  
Or waking more or sleeping  
Or night or morrow,  
Or cadence in the song  
Of saints, or thirst or hunger :  
The strong shall rise more strong,  
And the young younger.

3 November 1865.

### MOTHER COUNTRY

OH what is that country  
And where can it be,  
Not mine own country,  
But dearer far to me ?  
Yet mine own country,  
If I one day may see  
Its spices and cedars,  
Its gold and ivory.

As I lie dreaming,  
It rises, that land ;  
There rises before me  
Its green golden strand,  
With the bowing cedars  
And the shining sand ;  
It sparkles and flashes  
Like a shaken brand.

Do angels lean nearer  
While I lie and long ?  
I see their soft plumage  
And catch their windy song,

Like the rise of a high tide  
Sweeping full and strong ;  
I mark the outskirts  
Of their reverend throng.

Oh what is a king here,  
Or what is a boor ?  
Here all starve together,  
All dwarfed and poor ;  
Here Death's hand knocketh  
At door after door,  
He thins the dancers  
From the festal floor.

Oh what is a handmaid,  
Or what is a queen ?  
All must lie down together  
Where the turf is green,  
The foulest face hidden,  
The fairest not seen ;  
Gone as if never  
They had breathed or been.

Gone from sweet sunshine  
Underneath the sod,  
Turned from warm flesh and blood  
To senseless clod,  
Gone as if never  
They had toiled or trod,  
Gone out of sight of all  
Except our God.

Shut into silence  
From the accustomed song,  
Shut into solitude  
From all earth's throng,  
Run down though swift of foot,  
Thrust down though strong :  
Life made an end of,  
Seemed it short or long.

Life made an end of,—  
Life but just begun ;  
Life finished yesterday,  
Its last sand run ;

Life new-born with the morrow,  
 Fresh as the sun :  
 While done is done for ever ;  
 Undone, undone.

And if that life is life,  
 This is but a breath,  
 The passage of a dream  
 And the shadow of death ;  
 But a vain shadow  
 If one considereth ;  
 Vanity of vanities,  
 As the Preacher saith.

7 February 1866.

#### AFTER COMMUNION

WHY should I call Thee Lord, Who  
 art my God ?

Why should I call Thee Friend,  
 Who art my Love ?

Or King, Who art my very Spouse  
 above ?

Or call Thy Sceptre on my heart  
 Thy rod ?

Lo now Thy banner over me is love,  
 All heaven flies open to me at Thy  
 nod :

For Thou hast lit Thy flame in me  
 a clod,

Made me a nest for dwelling of  
 Thy Dove.

What wilt Thou call me in our  
 home above,

Who now hast called me friend ?  
 how will it be

When Thou for good wine  
 settest forth the best ?

Now Thou dost bid me come and  
 sup with Thee,

Now Thou dost make me lean  
 upon Thy breast :

How will it be with me in time of  
 love ?

23 February 1866.

#### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

In the bleak mid-winter  
 Frosty wind made moan,  
 Earth stood hard as iron,  
 Water like a stone ;  
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
 Snow on snow,  
 In the bleak mid-winter  
 Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold  
 Him

Nor earth sustain ;  
 Heaven and earth shall flee away  
 When He comes to reign :

In the bleak mid-winter  
 A stable-place sufficed  
 The Lord God Almighty  
 Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim  
 Worship night and day,  
 A breastful of milk  
 And a mangerful of hay ;  
 Enough for Him, whom angels  
 Fall down before,  
 The ox and ass and camel  
 Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
 May have gathered there,  
 Cherubim and seraphim  
 Thronged the air ;  
 But only His mother  
 In her maiden bliss  
 Worshipped the Beloved  
 With a kiss.

What can I give Him.  
 Poor as I am ?

If I were a shepherd  
 I would bring a lamb,

If I were a Wise Man  
 I would do my part,—  
 Yet what I can I give Him,  
 Give my heart.

*Before 1872.*

## WRESTLING

ALAS my Lord,  
 How should I wrestle all the live-  
 long night  
 With Thee my God, my strength  
 and my delight?

How can it need  
 So agonized an effort and a strain  
 To make Thy face of mercy shine  
 again?

How can it need  
 Such wringing out of breathless  
 prayer to move  
 Thee to Thy wonted love, when  
 Thou art Love?

Yet Abraham  
 So hung about Thine arm, out-  
 stretch and bared,  
 That for ten righteous Sodom had  
 been spared.

Yet Jacob did  
 So hold Thee by the clenched hand  
 of prayer  
 That he prevailed and Thou didst  
 bless him there.

Elias prayed,  
 And sealed the founts of heaven:  
 he prayed again,  
 And lo Thy blessing fell in showers  
 of rain.

Gulpt by the fish  
 And by the pit, lost Jonah made  
 his moan,  
 And Thou forgavest, waiting to  
 atone.

All Nineveh  
 Fasting and girt in sackcloth raised  
 a cry,  
 Which moved Thee ere the day of  
 grace went by.

Thy Church prayed on  
 And on for blessed Peter in his  
 strait,  
 Till opened of its own accord the  
 gate.

Yea Thou my God  
 Hast prayed all night, and in the  
 garden prayed,  
 Even while like melting wax Thy  
 strength was made.

Alas for him  
 Who faints despite Thy pattern,  
 King of Saints!  
 Alas alas for me the one that  
 faints!

Lord, give us strength  
 To hold Thee fast until we hear  
 Thy voice,  
 Which Thine own know who hearing  
 it rejoice.

Lord, give us strength  
 To hold Thee fast until we see Thy  
 Face,  
 Full fountain of all rapture and all  
 grace.

But, when our strength  
Shall be made darkness, and our  
bodies clay,  
Hold Thou us fast and give us sleep  
till day.

*Before 1875.*

# THE MASTER IS COME, AND CALLETH FOR THEE

WHO calleth?—Thy Father calleth,  
Run, O Daughter, to wait on  
Him :

He Who chasteneth but for a season  
Trims thy lamp that it burn not  
dim.

Who calleth?—Thy Master calleth,  
Sit, Disciple, and learn of Him :  
He Who teacheth wisdom of Angels  
Makes thee wise as the Cherubim.

Who calleth?—Thy Monarch calleth,  
Rise, O Subject, and follow Him :  
He is stronger than Death or Devil,  
Fear not thou if the foe be grim.

Who calleth?—Thy Lord God  
calleth,  
Fall, O Creature, adoring Him :  
He is jealous, thy God Almighty,  
Count not dear to thee life or  
limb.

Who calleth?—Thy Bridegroom  
calleth,  
Soar, O Bride, with the Seraphim :  
He Who loves thee as no man loveth  
Bids thee give up thy heart to  
Him.

*Before 1876.*

# 'WHEN MY HEART IS VEXED I WILL COMPLAIN'

'O LORD, how canst Thou say  
Thou lovest me—

Me whom thou settest in a barren  
land,

Hungry and thirsty on the burn-  
ing sand,

Hungry and thirsty where no waters  
be

Nor shadows of date-bearing tree :—

O Lord, how canst Thou say Thou  
lovest me ?'

'I came from Edom by as parched  
a track,

As rough a track beneath My  
bleeding feet.

I came from Edom seeking thee,  
and sweet

I counted bitterness ; I turned not  
back

But counted life as death, and trod  
The winepress all alone : and I am  
God.'

'Yet, Lord, how canst Thou say  
Thou lovest me ?

For Thou art strong to comfort :  
and could I

But comfort one I love who, like  
to die,

Lifts feeble hands and eyes that fail  
to see

In one last prayer for comfort—  
nay,

I could not stand aside or turn away.'

'Alas thou knowest that for thee I  
died,

For thee I thirsted with the dying  
thirst ;

I, blessèd, for thy sake was counted  
 curst,  
 In sight of men and angels crucified:  
 All this and more I bore to  
 prove  
 My love, and wilt thou yet mistrust  
 My love?’

‘Lord, I am fain to think Thou  
 lovest me,  
 For Thou art all in all and I am  
 Thine;  
 And lo Thy love is better than  
 new wine,  
 And I am sick of love in loving  
 Thee.  
 But dost Thou love me? Speak  
 and save,  
 For jealousy is cruel as the grave.’

‘Nay, if thy love is not an empty  
 breath,  
 My love is as thine own—deep  
 answers deep.  
 Peace, peace: I give to My be-  
 loved sleep—  
 Not death but sleep, for love is  
 strong as death.  
 Take patience: sweet thy sleep  
 shall be:  
 Yea thou shalt wake in Paradise  
 with Me.’

*Before 1876.*

## SAINTS AND ANGELS

It's oh in Paradise that I fain would  
 be,  
 Away from earth and weariness  
 and all beside:  
 Earth is too full of loss with its  
 dividing sea,  
 But Paradise upbuilds the bower  
 for the bride.

Where flowers are yet in bud while  
 the boughs are green,  
 I would get quit of earth and get  
 robed for heaven;  
 Putting on my raiment white within  
 the screen,  
 Putting on my crown of gold  
 whose gems are seven.

Fair is the fourfold river that maketh  
 no moan,  
 Fair are the trees fruit-bearing  
 of the wood,  
 Fair are the gold and bdellium and  
 the onyx stone,  
 And I know the gold of that  
 land is good.

O my love, my dove, lift up your  
 eyes  
 Toward the eastern gate like an  
 opening rose;  
 You and I who parted will meet in  
 Paradise,  
 Pass within and sing when the  
 gates unclose.

This life is but the passage of a  
 day,  
 This life is but a pang and all is  
 over,  
 But in the life to come which fades  
 not away  
 Every love shall abide and every  
 lover.

He who wore out pleasure and  
 mastered all lore,  
 Solomon wrote ‘Vanity of  
 vanities’:  
 Down to death, of all that went  
 before  
 In his mighty long life, the record  
 is this.



With loves by the hundred, wealth  
beyond measure,  
Is this he who wrote 'Vanity of  
vanities' ?  
Yea, 'Vanity of vanities' he saith  
of pleasure,  
And of all he learned set his seal  
to this.

Yet we love and faint not, for our  
love is one,  
And we hope and flag not, for  
our hope is sure ;  
Although there be nothing new  
beneath the sun,  
And no help for life and for death  
no cure.

The road to death is life, the gate  
of life is death,  
We who wake shall sleep, we  
shall wax who wane ;  
Let us not vex our souls for stoppage  
of a breath,  
The fall of a river that turneth  
not again.

Be the road short, and be the gate  
near,—  
Shall a short road tire, a strait  
gate appall ?  
The loves that meet in Paradise  
shall cast out fear,  
And Paradise hath room for you  
and me and all.

*Before 1876.*

### A ROSE PLANT IN JERICHO

AT morn I plucked a rose and gave  
it Thee,  
A rose of joy and happy love and  
peace,

A rose with scarce a thorn :  
But in the chillness of a second  
morn  
My rose bush drooped, and all  
its gay increase  
Was but one thorn that wounded  
me.

I plucked the thorn and offered it  
to Thee,  
And for my thorn Thou gavest  
love and peace,  
Not joy this mortal morn :  
If Thou hast given much  
treasure for a thorn,  
Wilt Thou not give me for my  
rose increase  
Of gladness, and all sweets to me ?

My thorny rose, my love and pain,  
to Thee  
I offer ; and I set my heart in  
peace,  
And rest upon my thorn :  
For verily I think to-morrow  
morn  
Shall bring me Paradise, my  
gift's increase,  
Yea, give Thy very Self to me.

*Before 1876.*

### PATIENCE OF HOPE

THE flowers that bloom in sun and  
shade,  
And glitter in the dew—  
The flowers must fade.  
The birds that build their nest and  
sing  
When lovely Spring is new  
Must soon take wing.

The sun that rises in his strength,  
To wake and warm the world,  
Must set at length.

The sea that overflows the shore  
With billows frothed and curled  
Must ebb once more.

All come and go, all wax and wane,  
O Lord, save only Thou,  
Who dost remain

The same to all eternity.  
All things which fail us now  
We trust to Thee.

*Circa 1880.*

### I WILL ARISE

WEARY and weak,—accept my weariness ;

Weary and weak and downcast in  
my soul,

With hope growing less and less,  
And with the goal

Distant and dim,—accept my sore  
distress.

I thought to reach the goal so long  
ago,

At outset of the race I dreamed  
of rest,

Not knowing what now I know  
Of breathless haste,  
Of long-drawn straining effort  
across the waste.

One only thing I knew, Thy love of  
me ;

One only thing I know, Thy sacred  
same

Love of me full and free,  
A craving flame

Of selfless love of me which burns  
in Thee.

How can I think of Thee, and yet  
grow chill ?

Of Thee, and yet grow cold and  
nigh to death ?

Re-energize my will,

Rebuild my faith ;

I will arise and run, Thou giving  
me breath.

I will arise, repenting and in pain ;

I will arise, and smite upon my  
breast

And turn to Thee again ;

Thou choosest best ;

Lead me along the road Thou makest  
plain.

Lead me a little way, and carry me

A little way, and hearken to my  
sighs,

And store my tears with Thee,

And deign replies

To feeble prayers ;—O Lord, I  
will arise.

*Before 1882.*

### A PRODIGAL SON

DOES that lamp still burn in my  
Father's house

Which he kindled the night I went  
away ?

I turned once beneath the cedar  
boughs,

And marked it gleam with a  
golden ray ;

Did he think to light me home  
some day ?

Hungry here with the crunching  
swine,

Hungry harvest have I to reap ;

In a dream I count my Father's kine,

I hear the tinkling bells of his  
sheep,

I watch his lambs that browse and  
leap.

There is plenty of bread at home,  
 His servants have bread enough  
 and to spare ;  
 The purple wine-fat froths with foam,  
 Oil and spices make sweet the  
 air,  
 While I perish hungry and bare.

Rich and blessed those servants,  
 rather  
 Than I who see not my Father's  
 face !

I will arise and go to my Father :—  
 ' Fallen from sonship, beggared  
 of grace,  
 Grant me, Father, a servant's  
 place.'

*Before 1882.*

### FOR THINE OWN SAKE, O MY GOD

WEARIED of sinning, wearied of  
 repentance,  
 Wearied of self, I turn, my God,  
 to Thee ;  
 To Thee, my Judge, on Whose all-  
 righteous sentence  
 Hangs mine eternity :  
 I turn to Thee, I plead Thyself with  
 Thee,—  
 Be pitiful to me.

Wearied I loathe myself, I loathe my  
 sinning,  
 My stains, my festering sores, my  
 misery :

Thou the Beginning, Thou ere my  
 beginning  
 Didst see and didst foresee  
 Me miserable, me sinful, ruined  
 me,—  
 I plead Thyself with Thee.

I plead Thyself with Thee Who art  
 my maker,  
 Regard Thy handiwork that cries  
 to Thee ;  
 I plead Thyself with Thee Who wast  
 partaker  
 Of mine infirmity ;  
 Love made Thee what Thou art, the  
 love of me,—  
 I plead Thyself with Thee.

*Before 1882.*

### UNTIL THE DAY BREAK

WHEN will the day bring its plea-  
 sure ?

When will the night bring its rest ?  
 Reaper and gleaner and thresher  
 Peer toward the east and the  
 west :—

The Sower He knoweth, and He  
 knoweth best.

Meteors flash forth and expire,  
 Northern lights kindle and pale ;  
 These are the days of desire,  
 Of eyes looking upward that fail ;  
 Vanishing days as a finishing tale.

Bows down the crop in its glory,  
 Tenfold, fiftyfold, hundredfold ;  
 The millet is ripened and hoary,  
 The wheat ears are ripened to  
 gold :—  
 Why keep us waiting in dimness  
 and cold ?

The Lord of the harvest, He knoweth  
 Who knoweth the first and the last :  
 The Sower Who patiently soweth,  
 He scanneth the present and past :  
 He saith, ' What thou hast, what  
 remaineth, hold fast.'

Yet, Lord, o'er Thy toil-wearied  
weepers

The storm-clouds hang muttering  
and frown :

On thrashers and gleaners and  
reapers,

O Lord of the harvest, look down ;  
Oh for the harvest, the shout,  
and the crown !

'Not so,' saith the Lord of the  
reapers,

The Lord of the first and the last :

'O Mytoilers, My weary, My weepers,  
What ye have, what remaineth,  
hold fast.

Hide in My heart till the ven-  
geance be past.'

*Before 1882.*

# 'OF HIM THAT WAS READY TO PERISH'

LORD, I am waiting, weeping, watch-  
ing for Thee :

My youth and hope lie by me  
buried and dead,

My wandering love hath not where  
to lay its head

Except Thou say 'Come to Me.'

My noon is ended, abolished from  
life and light,

My noon is ended, ended and done  
away,

My sun went down in the hours  
that still were day,

And my lingering day is night.

How long, O Lord, how long in my  
desperate pain

Shall I weep and watch, shall I  
weep and long for Thee ?

Is Thy grace ended, Thy love cut  
off from me ?

How long shall I long in vain ?

O God Who before the beginning  
hast seen the end,

Who hast made me flesh and  
blood, not frost and not fire,

Who hast filled me full of needs  
and love and desire

And a heart that craves a  
friend,—

Who hast said 'Come to Me and I  
will give thee rest,'

Who hast said 'Take on thee My  
yoke and learn of Me,'

Who calledst a little child to come  
to Thee,

And pillowedst John on Thy  
breast ;

Who spak'st to women that followed  
Thee sorrowing,

Bidding them weep for themselves  
and weep for their own ;

Who didst welcome the outlaw  
adoring Thee all alone,

And plight Thy word as a  
King,—

By Thy love of these and of all that  
ever shall be,

By Thy love of these and of all  
the born and unborn,

Turn Thy gracious eyes on me  
and think no scorn

Of me, not even of me.

Beside Thy Cross I hang on my  
cross in shame,

My wounds, weakness, extremity  
cry to Thee :

Bid me also to Paradise, also me,  
For the glory of Thy Name.

*Before 1882.*

## BEHOLD THE MAN

SHALL Christ hang on the Cross,  
and we not look?

Heaven, earth, and hell, stood  
gazing at the first,

While Christ for long-cursed man  
was counted cursed;

Christ, God and Man, Whom God  
the Father strook

And shamed and sifted and one  
while forsook:—

Cry shame upon our bodies we  
have nursed

In sweets, our souls in pride, our  
spirits immersed

In wilfulness, our steps run all acrook.

Cry shame upon us! for He bore our  
shame

In agony, and we look on at ease  
With neither hearts on flame nor  
cheeks on flame.

What hast thou, what have I, to  
do with peace?

Not to send peace but send a sword  
He came,

And fire and fasts and tearful  
night watches.

*Before 1882.*

THE DESCENT FROM THE  
CROSS

Is this the Face that thrills with awe  
Seraphs who veil their face above?

Is this the Face without a flaw,

The Face that is the Face of Love?

Yea, this defaced, a lifeless clod,

Hath all creation's love sufficed,

Hath satisfied the love of God,

This Face the Face of Jesus  
Christ.

*Before 1882.*

## IT IS FINISHED

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee  
Some of the great things Thou hast  
done

For me, even me

Thy little one.

It was not I that cared for Thee,—

But Thou didst set Thy heart upon

Me, even me

Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee

To leave Thy Majesty and Throne,

And grow like me

A Little One,

A swaddled Baby on the knee

Of a dear Mother of Thine own,

Quite weak like me

Thy little one.

Thou didst assume my misery,

And reap the harvest I had sown,

Comforting me

Thy little one.

Jerusalem and Galilee,—

Thy love embraced not those alone,

But also me

Thy little one.

Thy unblemished Body on the  
Tree

Was bared and broken to atone

For me, for me

Thy little one.

Thou lovedst me upon the Tree,—

Still me, hid by the ponderous  
stone,—

Me always—me

Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee  
When death and hell lay overthrown :  
Thou lovedst me  
Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee  
To sit upon Thy Father's Throne :  
Thou lovest me  
Thy little one.

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee  
Love in pure love's communion,  
For Thou lov'st me  
Thy little one :

Which love of me bring back with  
Thee  
To Judgment when the Trump is  
blown,  
Still loving me  
Thy little one.

*Before 1882.*

## AN EASTER CAROL

SPRING bursts to-day,  
For Christ is risen and all the earth's  
at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun,  
The rain is over and gone, its work  
is done.

Winter is past,  
Sweet Spring is come at last, is come  
at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine,  
Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and  
wine.

Break forth this morn  
In roses, thou but yesterday a thorn.

Uplift thy head,  
O pure white Lily through the  
Winter dead.

Beside your dams  
Leap and rejoice, you merry-making  
Lambs.

All Herds and Flocks  
Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and  
of rocks.

Sing, Creatures, sing,  
Angels and Men and Birds and  
everything.

All notes of Doves  
Fill all our world : this is the time  
of loves.

*Before 1882.*

## 'BEHOLD A SHAKING'

### I

MAN rising to the doom that shall  
not err,—

Which hath most dread—the  
arouse of all or each ?

All kindreds of all nations of all  
speech,

Or one by one of *him* and *him* and  
*her* ?

While dust reanimate begins to stir  
Here, there, beyond, beyond,  
reach beyond reach ;

While every wave refashions on  
the beach

Alive or dead-in-life some seafarer.  
Now meeting doth not join or  
parting part ;

True meeting and true parting  
wait till then,

When whoso meet are joined  
for evermore,

Face answering face and heart at  
rest in heart :—  
God bring us all rejoicing to  
the shore  
Of happy Heaven, His sheep  
home to the pen.

## 2

Blessed that flock safe penned in  
Paradise ;  
Blessed this flock which tramps  
in weary ways.  
All form one flock, God's flock ;  
all yield Him praise  
By joy or pain, still tending toward  
the prize.  
Joy speaks in praises there, and  
sings and flies  
Where no night is, exulting all  
its days ;  
Here, pain finds solace, for  
behold it prays ;  
In both love lives the life that never  
dies.  
Here life is the beginning of our death,  
And death the starting - point  
whence life ensues ;  
Surely our life is death, our  
death is life :  
Nor need we lay to heart our  
peace or strife,  
But calm in faith and patience  
breathe the breath  
God gave, to take again when He  
shall choose.

*Before 1882.*

## ALL SAINTS

THEY are flocking from the East  
And the West,  
They are flocking from the North  
And the South,

Every moment setting forth  
From realm of snake or lion,  
Swamp or sand,  
Ice or burning.  
Greatest and least,  
Palm in hand  
And praise in mouth,  
They are flocking up the path  
To their rest,  
Up the path that hath  
No returning.  
Up the steeps of Zion  
They are mounting,  
Coming, coming,  
Throngs beyond man's counting ;  
With a sound  
Like innumerable bees  
Swarming, humming,  
Where flowering trees  
Many-tinted,  
Many-scented,  
All alike abound  
With honey,—  
With a swell  
Like a blast upswaying unrestrain-  
able  
From a shadowed dell  
To the hill-tops sunny,—  
With a thunder  
Like the ocean when in strength  
Breadth and length  
It sets to shore.  
More and more  
Waves on waves redoubled pour  
Leaping flashing to the shore ;  
Unlike the under  
Drain of ebb that loseth ground  
For all its roar.

They are thronging  
From the East and West,  
From the North and South ;  
Saints are thronging, loving, long-  
ing,



To their land  
Of rest,  
Palm in hand  
And praise in mouth.

*Before 1882.*

### 'TAKE CARE OF HIM'

'THOU whom I love, for whom I  
died,  
Lovest thou Me, My bride?'—  
Low on my knees I love Thee,  
Lord,  
Believed in and adored.

'That I love thee the proof is  
plain :  
How dost thou love again?'—  
In prayer, in toil, in earthly loss,  
In a long-carried cross.

'Yea, thou dost love : yet one adept  
Brings more for Me to accept.'—  
I mould my will to match with  
Thine,  
My wishes I resign.

'Thou givest much : then give the  
whole  
For solace of My soul.'—  
More would I give, if I could get :  
But, Lord, what lack I yet ?

'In Me thou lovest Me : I call  
Thee to love Me in all.'—  
Brim full my heart, dear Lord, that so  
My love may overflow.

'Love me in sinners and in saints,  
In each who needs or faints.'—  
Lord, I will love Thee as I can  
In every brother man.

'All sore, all crippled, all who ache,  
Tend all for My dear sake.'—  
All for Thy sake, Lord : I will see  
In every sufferer Thee.

'So I at last, upon My Throne  
Of glory, Judge alone,  
So I at last will say to thee :  
Thou diddest it to Me.'

*Before 1882.*

### A MARTYR

#### THE VIGIL OF THE FEAST

INNER not outer, without gnash of  
teeth

Or weeping, save quiet sobs of  
some who pray

And feel the Everlasting Arms  
beneath,—

Blackness of darkness this, but not  
for aye ;

Darkness that even in gathering  
fleeteth fast,

Blackness of blackest darkness  
close to day.

Lord Jesus, through Thy darkened  
pillar cast

Thy gracious eyes all-seeing cast  
on me

Until this tyranny be overpast.

Me, Lord, remember who remember  
Thee,

And cleave to Thee, and see Thee  
without sight,

And choose Thee still in dire  
extremity,

And in this darkness worship Thee  
my Light,

And Thee my Life adore in shadow  
of death,

Thee loved by day, and still be-  
loved by night.

It is the Voice of my Beloved that  
saith :

‘I am the Way, the Truth, the  
Life, I go

Whither that soul knows well that  
followeth.’

O Lord, I follow, little as I know ;  
At this eleventh hour I rise and  
take

My life into my hand, and follow  
so,

With tears and heart-misgivings and  
heart-ache ;

Thy feeblest follower, yet Thy  
follower

Indomitable for Thine only sake.

To-night I gird my will afresh, and  
stir

My strength, and brace my heart  
to do and dare,—

Marvelling : Will to-morrow wake  
the whirr

Of the great rending wheel, or from  
his lair

Startle the jubilant lion in his  
rage,

Or clench the headsman’s hand  
within my hair,

Or kindle fire to speed my pilgrimage,  
Chariot of fire and horses of sheer  
fire

Whirling me home to heaven by  
one fierce stage?—

Thy Will I will, I Thy desire desire ;  
Let not the waters close above  
my head,

Uphold me that I sink not in this  
mire :

For flesh and blood are frail and  
sore afraid ;

And young I am, unsatisfied and  
young,

With memories, hopes, with crav-  
ings all unfed,

My song half sung, its sweetest notes  
unsung,

All plans cut short, all possibilities,  
Because my cord of life is soon  
unstrung.

Was I a careless woman set at  
ease

That this so bitter cup is brimmed  
for me ?

Had mine own vintage settled on  
the lees ?

A word, a puff of smoke, would set  
me free ;

A word, a puff of smoke, over  
and gone : . . .

Howbeit, whom have I, Lord, in  
heaven but Thee ?

Yea, only Thee my choice is fixed  
upon

In heaven or earth, eternity or  
time :—

Lord, hold me fast, Lord, leave  
me not alone,

Thy silly heartless dove that sees  
the lime

Yet almost flutters to the tempting  
bough :

Cover me, hide me, pluck me from  
this crime.

A word, a puff of smoke, would save  
me now : . . .

But who, my God, would save me  
in the day

Of Thy fierce anger? only Saviour  
Thou.

Preoccupy my heart, and turn away  
And cover up mine eyes from  
frantic fear,

And stop mine ears lest I be  
driven astray :

For one stands ever dinning in mine  
ear

How my grey Father withers in  
the blight

Of love for me, who cruel am and  
 dear ;  
 And how my Mother through this  
 lingering night  
 Until the day sits tearless in her  
 woe,  
 Loathing for love of me the happy  
 light  
 Which brings to pass a concourse  
 and a show  
 To glut the hungry faces merci-  
 less,  
 The thousand faces swaying to  
 and fro,  
 Feasting on me unveiled in helples-  
 ness,  
 Alone,—yet not alone : Lord,  
 stand by me  
 As once by lonely Paul in his  
 distress.  
 As blossoms to the sun I turn to  
 Thee ;  
 Thy dove turns to her window,  
 think no scorn ;  
 As one dove to an ark on shore-  
 less sea,  
 To Thee I turn mine eyes, my heart  
 forlorn.  
 Put forth Thy scarred right Hand,  
 kind Lord, take hold  
 Of me Thine all-forsaken dove  
 who mourn :  
 For Thou hast loved me since the  
 days of old,  
 And I love Thee Whom loving I  
 will love  
 Through life's short fever-fits of  
 heat and cold ;  
 Thy Name will I extol and sing  
 thereof,  
 Will flee for refuge to Thy Blessed  
 Name.  
 Lord, look upon me from Thy  
 bliss above :

Look down on me, who shrink from  
 all the shame  
 And pangs and desolation of my  
 death,  
 Wrenched piecemeal or devoured  
 or set on flame,  
 While all the world around me holds  
 its breath  
 With eyes glued on me for a  
 gazing-stock,  
 Pitiless eyes, while no man pitieth.  
 The floods are risen, I stagger in  
 their shock,  
 My heart reels and is faint, I fail,  
 I faint :  
 My God, set Thou me up upon  
 the rock,  
 Thou Who didst long ago Thyself  
 acquaint  
 With death, our death ; Thou Who  
 didst long ago  
 Pour forth Thy soul for sinner  
 and for saint.  
 Bear me in mind, whom no one else  
 will know ;  
 Thou Whom Thy friends forsook,  
 take Thou my part,  
 Of all forsaken in mine overthrow ;  
 Carry me in Thy bosom, in Thy  
 heart,  
 Carry me out of darkness into light,  
 To-morrow make me see Thee as  
 Thou art.  
 Lover and friend Thou hidest from  
 my sight.  
 Alas, alas, mine earthly love, alas,  
 For whom I thought to don the  
 garments white  
 And white wreath of a bride, this  
 rugged pass  
 Hath utterly divorced me from  
 thy care.  
 Yea, I am to thee as a shattered  
 glass

Worthless, with no more beauty  
 lodging there,  
 Abhorred, lest I involve thee in  
 my doom :  
 For sweet are sunshine and this  
 upper air,  
 And life and youth are sweet, and  
 give us room  
 For all most sweetest sweetnesses  
 we taste :  
 Dear, what hast thou in common  
 with a tomb ?  
 I bow my head in silence, I make  
 haste  
 Alone, I make haste out into the  
 dark,  
 My life and youth and hope all  
 run to waste.  
 Is this my body cold and stiff and  
 stark,  
 Ashes made ashes, earth becoming  
 earth,  
 Is this a prize for man to make  
 his mark ?  
 Am I that very I who laughed in  
 mirth  
 A while ago, a little little while,  
 Yet all the while a-dying since  
 my birth ?  
 Now am I tired, too tired to strive  
 or smile ;  
 I sit alone, my mouth is in the dust :  
 Look Thou upon me, Lord, for I  
 am vile.  
 In Thee is all my hope, is all my  
 trust,  
 On Thee I centre all my self that  
 dies,  
 And self that dies not with its  
 mortal crust,  
 But sleeps and wakes, and in the  
 end will rise  
 With hymns and hallelujahs on  
 its lips,

Thee loving with the love that  
 satisfies.  
 As once in Thine unutterable eclipse  
 The sun and moon grew dark for  
 sympathy,  
 And earth cowered quaking under-  
 neath the drips  
 Of Thy slow Blood priceless exceed-  
 ingly,  
 So now a little spare me, and  
 show forth  
 Some pity, O my God, some pity  
 of me.  
 If trouble comes not from the south  
 or north,  
 But meted to us by Thy tender  
 hand,  
 Let me not in Thine eyes be  
 nothing worth :  
 Behold me where in agony I stand,  
 Behold me no man caring for my  
 soul,  
 And take me to Thee in the far-  
 off land,  
 Shorten the race and lift me to the  
 goal.

*Before 1882.*

### WHY?

'LORD, if I love Thee and Thou  
 lovest me,  
 Why need I any more these toil-  
 some days ?  
 Why should I not run singing up  
 Thy ways  
 Straight into heaven, to rest myself  
 with Thee ?  
 What need remains of death-pang  
 yet to be,  
 If all my soul is quickened in Thy  
 praise ?  
 If all my heart loves Thee, what  
 need the amaze,

Struggle and dimness of an  
agony?'—

'Bride whom I love, if thou too  
lovest Me,

Thou needs must choose My Like-  
ness for thy dower :

Sowilt thou toil in patience, and  
abide

Hungering and thirsting for that  
blessed hour

When I My Likeness shall behold in  
thee,

And thou therein shalt waken  
satisfied.'

*Before 1882.*

### LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH

I HAVE not sought Thee, I have  
not found Thee,

I have not thirsted for Thee :

And now cold billows of death sur-  
round me,

Buffeting billows of death astound  
me,—

Wilt Thou look upon, wilt Thou  
see

Thy perishing me ?'

'Yea, I have sought thee, yea, I  
have found thee,

Yea, I have thirsted for thee,

Yea, long ago with love's bands I  
bound thee :

Now the Everlasting Arms surround  
thee,—

Through death's darkness I look  
and see

And clasp thee to Me.'

*Before 1882.*

'IF THOU SAYEST, BEHOLD,  
WE KNEW IT NOT.'—

PROVERBS xxiv. 11, 12.

I

I HAVE done I know not what,—  
what have I done ?

My brother's blood, my brother's  
soul, doth cry :

And I find no defence, find no  
reply,

Nocourage more to run this race I run,  
Not knowing what I have done, have  
left undone ;

Ah me, these awful unknown hours  
that fly,

Fruitless it may be, fleeting fruit-  
less by,

Rank with death-savour underneath  
the sun !

For what avails it that I did not  
know

The deed I did ? what profits me  
the plea

That had I known I had not wronged  
him so ?

Lord Jesus Christ, my God,  
him pity Thou ;

Lord, if it may be, pity also me :

In judgment pity, and in death,  
and now.

2

Thou Who hast borne all burdens,  
bear our load,

Bear Thou our load whatever load  
it be ;

Our guilt, our shame, our helpless  
misery,

Bear Thou Who only canst, O God  
my God.

Seek us and find us, for we cannot  
Thee

Or seek or find or hold or cleave  
unto :  
We cannot do or undo ; Lord,  
undo  
Our self-undoing, for Thine is the  
key  
Of all we are not though we might  
have been.  
Dear Lord, if ever mercy moved  
Thy mind,  
If so be love of us can move  
Thee yet,  
If still the nail-prints in Thy Hands  
are seen,  
Remember us,—yea how  
shouldst Thou forget ?  
Remember us for good, and seek,  
and find.

## 3

Each soul I might have succoured,  
may have slain,  
All souls shall face me at the last  
Appeal,  
That great last moment poised for  
woe or weal,  
That final moment for man's bliss or  
bane.  
Vanity of vanities, yea all is vain  
Which then will not avail or  
help or heal :  
Disfeatured faces, worn-out knees  
that kneel,  
Will more avail than strength or  
beauty then.  
Lord, by Thy Passion,—when Thy  
Face was marred  
In sight of earth and hell tumult-  
uous,  
And Thy heart failed in Thee  
like melting wax,  
And Thy Blood dropped more  
precious than the nard,—

Lord, for Thy sake, not ours,  
supply our lacks,  
For Thine own sake, not ours,  
Christ, pity us.

*Before 1882.*

## THE THREAD OF LIFE

## I

THE irresponsible silence of the land,  
The irresponsible sounding of the  
sea,  
Speak both one message of one  
sense to me :—  
'Aloof, aloof, we stand aloof ; so  
stand  
Thou too aloof bound with the flaw-  
less band  
Of inner solitude ; we bind not  
thee ;  
But who from thy self-chain shall  
set thee free ?  
What heart shall touch thy heart ?  
what hand thy hand ?'—  
And I am sometimes proud and  
sometimes meek,  
And sometimes I remember days  
of old  
When fellowship seemed not so far  
to seek  
And all the world and I seemed  
much less cold,  
And at the rainbow's foot lay  
surely gold,  
And hope felt strong and life itself  
not weak.

## 2

Thus am I mine own prison. Every-  
thing  
Around me free and sunny and at  
ease :

Or if in shadow, in a shade of  
trees  
Which the sun kisses, where the gay  
birds sing  
And where all winds make various  
murmuring ;  
Where bees are found, with honey  
for the bees ;  
Where sounds are music, and  
where silences  
Are music of an unlike fashioning.  
Then gaze I at the merrymaking  
crew,  
And smile a moment and a  
moment sigh,  
Thinking, Why can I not rejoice  
with you ?  
But soon I put the foolish fancy  
by :  
I am not what I have nor what I  
do ;  
But what I was I am, I am even I.

## 3

Therefore myself is that one only  
thing  
I hold to use or waste, to keep or  
give ;  
My sole possession every day I  
live,  
And still mine own despite Time's  
winnowing.  
Ever mine own, while moons and  
seasons bring  
From crudeness ripeness mellow  
and sanative ;  
Ever mine own, till Death shall  
ply his sieve ;  
And still mine own, when saints  
break grave and sing.  
And this myself as king unto my  
King

I give, to Him Who gave Himself  
for me ;  
Who gives Himself to me, and bids  
me sing  
A sweet new song of His redeemed  
set free ;  
He bids me sing, O Death, where  
is thy sting ?  
And sing, O grave, where is thy  
victory ?

*Before 1882.*

A SICK CHILD'S MEDITA-  
TION

PAIN and weariness, aching eyes  
and head,  
Pain and weariness all the day  
and night :  
Yet the pillow's soft on my smooth  
soft bed,  
And fresh air blows in, and  
mother shades the light.

Thou, O Lord, in pain hadst no  
pillow soft,  
In Thy weary pain, in Thine  
agony :  
But a cross of shame held Thee up  
aloft  
Where Thy very mother could do  
nought for Thee.

I would gaze on Thee, on Thy  
patient face ;  
Make me like Thyself, patient,  
sweet, at peace ;  
Make my days all love, and my  
nights all praise,  
Till all days and nights and  
patient sufferings cease.

*Circa 1885.*



OUT OF THE DEEP HAVE  
I CALLED UNTO THEE,  
O LORD.

*(From before 1886 to before 1893.)*

ALONE Lord God, in Whom our  
trust and peace,  
Our love and our desire, glow  
bright with hope ;  
Lift us above this transitory scope  
Of earth, these pleasures that begin  
and cease,  
This moon which wanes, these  
seasons which decrease :  
We turn to Thee ; as on an  
eastern slope  
Wheat feels the dawn beneath  
night's lingering cope,  
Bending and stretching sunward ere  
it sees.

Alone Lord God, we see not yet we  
know ;  
By love we dwell with patience  
and desire,  
And loving so and so desiring  
pray ;  
Thy Will be done in earth as  
heaven to-day ;  
As yesterday it was, to-morrow so ;  
Love offering love on love's self-  
feeding fire.

*Before 1893.*

SEVEN vials hold Thy wrath : but  
what can hold  
Thy mercy save Thine own Infini-  
tude,  
Boundlessly overflowing with all  
good,  
All lovingkindness, all delights un-  
told ?

Thy Love, of each created love the  
mould ;

Thyself, of all the empty pleni-  
tude ;

Heard of at Ephrata, found in  
the Wood,

For ever One, the Same, and Mani-  
fold.

Lord, give us grace to tremble with  
that dove

Which Ark-bound winged its  
solitary way

And overpast the Deluge in a day,  
Whom Noah's hand pulled in and  
comforted :

For we who much more hang upon  
Thy Love

Behold its shadow in the deed he  
did.

*Before 1893.*

Where neither rust nor moth doth  
corrupt.

NERVE us with patience, Lord, to  
toil or rest,

Toiling at rest on our allotted  
level ;

Unsnared, unscared by world or  
flesh or devil,

Fulfilling the good Will of Thy  
behest :

Not careful here to hoard, not  
here to revel ;

But waiting for our treasure and our  
zest

Beyond the fading splendour of the  
west,

Beyond this deathstruck life and  
deathlier evil.

Not with the sparrow building here  
a house :

But with the swallow tabernacling  
 so  
 As still to poise alert to rise and  
 go  
 On eager wings with wing-out-  
 speeding wills  
 Beyond earth's gourds and past her  
 almond boughs,  
 Past utmost bound of the ever-  
 lasting hills.

*Before 1893.*

As the sparks fly upwards.

LORD, grant us wills to trust Thee  
 with such aim  
 Of hope and passionate craving  
 of desire  
 That we may mount aspiring,  
 and aspire  
 Still while we mount; rejoicing in  
 Thy Name,  
 Yesterday, this day, day by day the  
 Same :  
 So sparks fly upward scaling  
 heaven by fire,  
 Still mount and still attain not,  
 yet draw nigher,  
 While they have being, to their  
 fountain flame.  
 To saints who mount, the bottomless  
 abyss  
 Is as mere nothing, they have set  
 their face  
 Onward and upward toward that  
 blessed place  
 Where man rejoices with his God,  
 and soul  
 With soul, in the unutterable kiss  
 Of peace for every victor at the  
 goal.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, make us all love all : that  
 when we meet,  
 Even myriads of earth's myriads,  
 at Thy Bar,  
 We may be glad as all true lovers  
 are  
 Who having parted count reunion  
 sweet.  
 Safe gathered home around Thy  
 blessed Feet,  
 Come home by different roads  
 from near or far,  
 Whether by whirlwind or by  
 flaming car,  
 From pangs or sleep, safe folded  
 round Thy seat.  
 Oh if our brother's blood cry out at  
 us,  
 How shall we meet Thee Who  
 hast loved us all,  
 Thee Whom we never loved,  
 not loving him ?  
 The unloving cannot chant  
 with Seraphim,  
 Bear harp of gold or palm victorious,  
 Or face the Vision Beatifical.

*Before 1893.*

O LORD, I am ashamed to seek  
 Thy Face  
 As tho' I loved Thee as Thy  
 saints love Thee :  
 Yet turn from those Thy lovers,  
 look on me,  
 Disgrace me not with uttermost  
 disgrace ;  
 But pour on me ungracious, pour  
 Thy grace  
 To purge my heart and bid my  
 will go free,  
 Till I too taste Thy hidden Sweet-  
 ness, see

Thy hidden Beauty in the holy  
place.

O Thou Who callest sinners to  
repent,

Call me Thysinner unto penitence,  
For many sins grant me the  
greater love :

Set me above the waterfloods,  
above

Devil and shifting world and  
fleshly sense,

Thy Mercy's all-amazing monument.

*Before 1893.*

IT is not death, O Christ, to die for  
Thee :

Nor is that silence of a silent  
land

Which speaks Thy praise so all  
may understand :

Darkness of death makes Thy dear  
lovers see

Thyself Who Wast and Art and  
Art to Be ;

Thyself, more lovely than the  
lovely band

Of saints who worship Thee on  
either hand,

Loving and loved thro' all eternity.

Death is not death, and therefore  
do I hope :

Nor silence silence ; and I there-  
fore sing

A very humble hopeful quiet  
psalm,

Searching my heart-field for an  
offering ;

A handful of sun-courting helio-  
trope,

Of myrrh a bundle, and a little  
balm.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, grant us eyes to see and ears  
to hear,

And souls to love and minds to  
understand,

And steadfast faces toward the  
Holy Land,

And confidence of hope, and filial  
fear,

And citizenship where Thy saints  
appear

Before Thee heart in heart and  
hand in hand,

And Alleluias where their chanting  
band

As waters and as thunders fill the  
sphere.

Lord, grant us what Thou wilt, and  
what Thou wilt

Deny, and fold us in Thy peaceful  
fold :

Not as the world gives, give to  
us Thine own :

Inbuild us where Jerusalem is built  
With walls of jasper and with  
streets of gold,

And Thou Thyself, Lord Christ,  
for Corner Stone.

*Before 1893.*

'Cried out with Tears.'

LORD, I believe, help Thou mine  
unbelief :

Lord, I repent, help mine impeni-  
tence :

Hide not Thy Face from me, nor  
spurn me hence,

Nor utterly despise me in my grief ;

Nor say me nay, who worship with  
the thief

Bemoaning my so long lost in-  
nocence :—

Ah me! my penitence a fresh  
offence,  
Too tardy and too tepid and too  
brief.

Lord, must I perish, I who look to  
Thee?

Look Thou upon me, bid me live,  
not die;

Say 'Come,' say not 'Depart,'  
tho' Thou art just:

Yea, Lord, be mindful how out  
of the dust

I look to Thee while Thou dost look  
on me,

Thou Face to face with me and  
Eye to eye.

*Before 1893.*

O LORD, on Whom we gaze and  
dare not gaze,

Increase our faith that gazing we  
may see,

And seeing love, and loving  
worship Thee

Thro' all our days, our long and  
lengthening days.

O Lord, accessible to prayer and  
praise,

Kind Lord, Companion of the two  
or three,

Good Lord, be gracious to all  
men and me,

Lighten our darkness and amend  
our ways.

Call up our hearts to Thee, that  
where Thou art

Our treasure and our heart may  
dwell at one:

Then let the pallid moon pursue  
her sun,

So long as it shall please Thee, far  
apart,—

Yet art Thou with us, Thou to  
Whom we run,  
We hand in hand with Thee and  
heart in heart.

*Before 1893.*

'I will come and heal him.'

O LORD God, hear the silence of  
each soul,

Its cry unutterable of ruth and  
shame,

Its voicelessness of self-contempt  
and blame:

Nor suffer harp and palm and aureole  
Of multitudes who praise Thee at  
the goal

To set aside Thy poor and blind  
and lame;

Nor blazing Seraphs utterly to  
outflame

The spark that flies up from each  
earthly coal.

My price Thy priceless Blood; and  
therefore I

Price of Thy priceless Blood am  
precious so

That good things love me in  
their love of Thee:

I comprehend not why Thou  
lovedst me

With Thy so mighty Love; but  
this I know,

No man hath greater love than thus  
to die.

*Before 1893.*

AH Lord, Lord, if my heart were  
right with Thine

As Thine with mine, then should  
I rest resigned,

Awaiting knowledge with a quiet  
mind

Because of heavenly wisdom's  
anodyne.

Then would Thy Love be more to  
me than wine,

Then should I seek being sure at  
length to find,

Then should I trust to Thee all  
humankind

Because Thy Love of them is more  
than mine.

Then should I stir up hope and  
comfort me

Remembering Thy Cradle and  
Thy Cross ;

How Heaven to Thee without us  
had been loss,

How Heaven with us is Thy one  
only Heaven,

Heaven shared with us thro' all  
eternity,

With us long sought, long loved,  
and much forgiven.

*Before 1893.*

The gold of that land is good.

I LONG for joy, O Lord, I long for  
gold,

I long for all Thou profferest to  
me,

I long for the unimagined manifold  
Abundance laid up in Thy treasury.

I long for pearls, but not from  
mundane sea ;

I long for palms, but not from earthly  
mould ;

Yet in all else I long for, long for  
Thee,

Thyself to hear and worship and  
behold.

For Thee, beyond the splendour of  
that day

Where all is day and is not any  
night ;

For Thee, beyond refreshment  
of that rest

To which tired saints press on  
for its delight :—

Or if not thus for Thee, yet Thee I  
pray

To make me long so till Thou  
make me blest.

*Before 1893.*

WEIGH all my faults and follies  
righteously,

Omissions and commissions, sin  
on sin ;

Make deep the scale, O Lord, to  
weigh them in ;

Yea, set the Accuser vulture-eyed to  
see

All loads ingathered which belong  
to me :

That so in life the judgement may  
begin,

And Angels learn how hard it is  
to win

One solitary sinful soul to Thee.

I have no merits for a counterpoise :  
Oh vanity my work and hastening

day,  
What can I answer to the accusing  
voice ?

Lord, drop Thou in the counter-  
scale alone

One Drop from Thine own Heart,  
and overweigh

My guilt, my folly, even my heart  
of stone.

*Before 1886.*

LORD, grant me grace to love Thee  
in my pain,

Thro' all my disappointment love  
Thee still,

Thy love my strong foundation  
and my hill,  
Tho' I be such as cometh not  
again,  
A fading leaf, a spark upon the  
wane :  
So evermore do Thou Thy perfect  
Will,  
Beloved thro' all my good, thro'  
all mine ill,  
Beloved tho' all my love beside be  
vain.  
If thus I love Thee, how wilt Thou  
love me,  
Thou Who art greater than my  
heart ? (Amen !)  
Wilt Thou bestow a part, with-  
hold a part ?  
The longing of my heart cries out  
to Thee,  
The hungering thirsting longing  
of my heart :  
What I forewent wilt Thou not  
grant me then ?

*Before 1886.*

LORD, make me one with Thine own  
faithful ones,  
Thy Saints who love Thee and  
are loved by Thee ;  
Till the day break and till the  
shadows flee,  
At one with them in alms and  
orisons ;  
At one with him who toils and him  
who runs,  
And him who yearns for union  
yet to be ;  
At one with all who throng the  
crystal sea  
And wait the setting of our moons  
and suns.  
Ah my belovèd ones gone on before,

Who looked not back with hand  
upon the plough !  
If beautiful to me while still in  
sight,  
How beautiful must be your  
aspects now ;  
Your unknown, well-known  
aspects in that light  
Which clouds shall never cloud for  
evermore.

*Before 1893.*

Light of Light.

O CHRIST our Light, Whom even  
in darkness we  
(So we look up) discern and gaze  
upon,  
O Christ, Thou loveliest Light  
that ever shone,  
Thou Light of Light, Fount of all  
lights that be,  
Grant us clear vision of Thy Light  
to see,  
Tho' other lights elude us, or  
be gone  
Into the secret of oblivion,  
Or gleam in places higher than  
man's degree.  
Who looks on Thee looks full on his  
desire,  
Who looks on Thee looks full on  
Very Love :  
Looking, he answers well,  
'What lack I yet ?'  
His heat and cold wait not on earthly  
fire,  
His wealth is not of earth to  
lose or get ;  
Earth reels, but he has stored his  
store above.

*Before 1893.*

## GIFTS AND GRACES

*(From before 1886 to before 1893.)*

LOVE loveth Thee, and wisdom  
loveth Thee ;  
The love that loveth Thee sits  
satisfied ;  
Wisdom that loveth Thee grows  
million-eyed,  
Learning what was, and is, and is  
to be.  
Wisdom and love are glad of all  
they see ;  
Their heart is deep, their hope is  
not denied ;  
They rock at rest on time's un-  
resting tide,  
And wait to rest thro' long eternity.  
Wisdom and love and rest, each  
holy soul  
Hath these to-day while day is  
only night :  
What shall souls have when  
morning brings to light  
Love, wisdom, rest, God's treasure  
stored above ?  
Palm shall they have, and harp and  
aureole,  
Wisdom, rest, love—and lo ! the  
whole is love.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, give me love that I may love  
Thee much,  
Yea, give me love that I may love  
Thee more,  
And all for love may worship and  
adore  
And touch Thee with love's conse-  
crated touch.  
I halt to-day ; be love my cheerful  
crutch,

My feet to plod, some day my  
wings to soar :

Some day ; but, Lord, not any  
day before

Thou call me perfect, having made  
me such.

This is a day of love, a day of sorrow,  
Love tempering sorrow to a sort  
of bliss ;

A day that shortens while we  
call it long :

A longer day of love will dawn to-  
morrow,

A longer, brighter, lovelier day  
than this,

Endless, all love, no sorrow,  
but a song.

*Before 1893.*

'As a king, . . . unto the King.'

LOVE doth so grace and dignify  
That beggars treat as king with  
king

Before the Throne of God most  
High :

Love recognizes love's own cry,  
And stoops to take love's offering

A loving heart, tho' soiled and  
bruised ;

A kindling heart, tho' cold before ;  
Who ever came and was refused  
By Love ? Do, Lord, as Thou art  
used

To do, and make me love Thee  
more.

*Before 1886.*

O YE who love to-day,  
Turn away  
From Patience with her silver ray :



For Patience shows a twilight face,  
Like a half-lighted moon  
When daylight dies apace.

But ye who love to-morrow,  
Beg or borrow  
To-day some bitterness of sorrow :  
For Patience shows a lustrous face,  
In depth of night her noon ;  
Then to her sun gives place.

*Before 1893.*

LIFE that was born to-day  
Must make no stay  
But tend to end  
As blossom-bloom of May.  
O Lord, confirm my root,  
Train up my shoot,  
To live and give  
Harvest of wholesome fruit.

Life that was born to die  
Sets heart on high,  
And counts and mounts  
Steep stages of the sky.  
Two things, Lord, I desire  
And I require ;  
Love's name, and flame  
To wrap my soul in fire.

Life that was born to love  
Sends heart above  
Both cloud and shroud,  
And broods a peaceful dove.  
Two things I ask of Thee ;  
Deny not me ;  
Eyesight and light  
Thy Blessed Face to see.

*Before 1893.*

Perfect Love casteth out Fear.

LORD, give me blessed fear,  
And much more blessed love,

That fearing I may love Thee here  
And be Thy harmless dove :

Until Thou cast out fear,  
Until Thou perfect love,  
Until Thou end mine exile here  
And fetch Thee home Thy dove.

*Before 1893.*

HOPE is the counterpoise of fear  
While night enthalls us here.

Fear hath a startled eye that holds  
a tear :

Hope hath an upward glance, for  
dawn draws near

With sunshine and with cheer.

Fear gazing earthwards spies a bier ;  
And sets herself to rear

A lamentable tomb where leaves  
drop sere,

Bleaching to congruous skeletons  
austere :

Hope chants a funeral hymn most  
sweet and clear,

And seems true chanticleer

Of resurrection and of all things  
dear

In the oncoming endless year.

Fear ballasts hope, hope buoys up  
fear,

And both befit us here.

*Before 1893.*

Subject to like Passions as we are.

WHOSO hath anguish is not dead in  
sin,

Whoso hath pangs of utterless  
desire.

Like as in smouldering flax which  
harbours fire,—

Red heat of conflagration may  
begin,  
Melt that hard heart, burn out the  
dross within,  
Permeate with glory the new man  
entire,  
Crown him with fire, mould for  
his hands a lyre  
Of fiery strings to sound with those  
who win.

Anguish is anguish, yet potential  
bliss,  
Pangs of desire are birth-throes of  
delight ;  
Those citizens felt such who walk  
in white,  
And meet, but no more sunder, with  
a kiss ;  
Who fathom still-unfathomed mys-  
teries,  
And love, adore, rejoice, with all  
their might.

*Before 1893.*

EXPERIENCE bows a sweet contented  
face,  
Still setting-to her seal that God  
is true :  
Beneath the sun, she knows, is  
nothing new ;  
All things that go return with meas-  
ured pace,  
Winds, rivers, man's still recommen-  
ding race :—  
While Hope beyond earth's circle  
strains her view,  
Past sun and moon, and rain and  
rainbow too,  
Enamoured of unseen eternal grace.  
Experience saith, ' My God doth all  
things well ' :  
And for the morrow taketh little  
care,

Such peace and patience garrison  
her soul :—  
While Hope, who never yet hath  
eyed the goal,  
With arms flung forth, and back-  
ward-floating hair,  
Touches, embraces, hugs the in-  
visible.

*Before 1893.*

Charity never faileth.

SUCH is Love, it comforts in ex-  
tremity,  
Tho' a tempest rage around and  
rage above,  
Tempest beyond tempest, far as eye  
can see :  
Such is Love

That it simply heeds its mourning  
inward Dove ;  
Dove which craves contented for a  
home to be  
Set amid the myrtles of an olive  
grove.

Dove-eyed Love contemplates the  
Twelve-fruited Tree,  
Marks the bowing palms which  
worship as they move ;  
Simply sayeth, simply prayeth, ' All  
for me ! '  
Such is Love.

*Before 1893.*

The Greatest of these is Charity.

A MOON impoverished amid stars  
curtailed,  
A sun of its exuberant lustre shorn,  
A transient morning that is  
scarcely morn,  
A lingering night in double dimness  
veiled.—

Our hands are slackened and our  
strength has failed :

We born to darkness, wherefore  
were we born ?

No ripening more for olive, grape,  
or corn :

Faith faints, hope faints, even love  
himself has paled.

Nay ! love lifts up a face like any  
rose

Flushing and sweet above a thorny  
stem,

Softly protesting that the way he  
knows ;

And as for faith and hope, will  
carry them

Safe to the gate of New Jeru-  
salem,

Where light shines full and where  
the palm-tree blows.

*Before 1893.*

ALL beneath the sun hasteth,  
All that hath begun wasteth ;  
Earth-notes change in tune  
With the changeful moon,  
Which waneth  
While earth's chant complaineth.

Plumbs the deep, Fear descending ;  
Scales the steep, Hope ascending ;  
Faith betwixt the twain  
Plies both goad and rein,  
Half fearing,  
All hopeful, day is nearing.

*Before 1893.*

IF thou be dead, forgive and thou  
shalt live ;

If thou hast sinned, forgive and be  
forgiven ;

R

God waiteth to be gracious and for-  
give,  
And open heaven.

Set not thy will to die and not to  
live ;

Set not thy face as flint refusing  
heaven ;

Thou fool, set not thy heart on hell :  
forgive

And be forgiven.

*Before 1893.*

Let Patience have her perfect work.

CAN man rejoice who lives in hourly  
fear ?

Can man make haste who toils  
beneath a load ?

Can man feel rest who has no  
fixed abode ?

All he lays hold of, or can see or  
hear,

Is passing by, is prompt to dis-  
appear,

Is doomed, foredoomed, continueth  
in no stay :

This day he breathes in is his latter  
day,

This year of time is this world's  
latter year.

Thus in himself is he most miserable:  
Out of himself, Lord, lift him up

to Thee,

Out of himself and all these worlds  
that flee ;

Hold him in patience underneath  
the rod,

Anchor his hope beyond life's ebb  
and swell,

Perfect his patience in the love  
of God.

*Before 1893.*

T

PATIENCE must dwell with Love, for  
 Love and Sorrow  
 Have pitched their tent together  
 here :  
 Love all alone will build a house to-  
 morrow,  
 And Sorrow not be near.

To-day for Love's sake hope ; still  
 hope in Sorrow,  
 Rest in her shade and hold her  
 dear.  
 To-day she nurses thee ; and lo  
 to-morrow  
 Love only will be near.

*Before 1893.*

Let everything that hath breath praise  
 the Lord.

ALL that we see rejoices in the  
 sunshine,  
 All that we hear makes merry in  
 the Spring :  
 God grant us such a mind to be  
 glad after our kind,  
 And to sing  
 His praises evermore for every-  
 thing.

Much that we see must vanish with  
 the sunshine,  
 Sweet Spring must fail, and fail  
 the choir of Spring :  
 But Wisdom shall burn on when  
 the lesser lights are gone,  
 And shall sing  
 God's praises evermore for every-  
 thing.

*Before 1893.*

WHAT is the beginning ? Love.  
 What the course ? Love still.  
 What the goal ? The goal is Love  
 on the happy hill.  
 Is there nothing then but Love,  
 search we sky or earth ?  
 There is nothing out of Love hath  
 perpetual worth :  
 All things flag but only Love, all  
 things fail or flee ;  
 There is nothing left but Love  
 worthy you and me.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, make me pure :  
 Only the pure shall see Thee as  
 Thou art,  
 And shall endure.  
 Lord, bring me low ;  
 For Thou wert lowly in Thy blessed  
 heart :  
 Lord, keep me so.

*Before 1893.*

LOVE, to be love, must walk Thy  
 way  
 And work Thy Will ;  
 Or if Thou say ' Lie still,'  
 Lie still and pray.

Love, Thine own Bride, with all  
 her might  
 Will follow Thee,  
 And till the shadows flee  
 Keep Thee in sight.

Love will not mar her peaceful face  
 With cares undue,  
 Faithless and hopeless too  
 And out of place.

Love, knowing Thou much more  
 art Love,  
 Will sun her grief,  
 And pluck her myrtle-leaf,  
 And be Thy dove.

Love here hath vast beatitude :  
 What shall be hers  
 Where there is no more curse,  
 But all is good ?

*Before 1893.*

LORD, I am feeble and of mean  
 account :  
 Thou Who dost condescend as well  
 as mount,  
 Stoop Thou Thyself to me  
 And grant me grace to hear and  
 grace to see.

Lord, if Thou grant me grace to  
 hear and see  
 Thy very Self Who stoopest thus  
 to me,  
 I make but slight account  
 Of aught beside wherein to sink  
 or mount.

*Before 1893.*

TUNE me, O Lord, into one harmony  
 With Thee, one full responsive  
 vibrant chord ;  
 Unto Thy praise, all love and  
 melody,  
 Tune me, O Lord.

Thus need I flee nor death nor  
 fire nor sword :  
 A little while these be, then cease  
 to be ;  
 And sent by Thee not these  
 should be abhorred.

Devil and world gird me with  
 strength to flee,  
 To flee the flesh, and arm me  
 with Thy word :  
 As Thy Heart is to my heart, unto  
 Thee  
 Tune me, O Lord.  
*Before 1893.*

They shall be as white as snow.

WHITENESS most white. Ah to be  
 clean again  
 In mine own sight and God's  
 most holy sight !  
 To reach thro' any flood or fire of  
 pain  
 Whiteness most white :

To learn to hate the wrong and  
 love the right  
 Even while I walk thro' shadows  
 that are vain,  
 Descending thro' vain shadows  
 into night.

Lord, not to-day : yet some day  
 bliss for bane  
 Give me, for mortal frailty give  
 me might,  
 Give innocence for guilt, and for  
 my stain  
 Whiteness most white.

*Before 1893.*

THY lilies drink the dew,  
 Thy lambs the rill, and I will  
 drink them too ;  
 For those in purity  
 And innocence are types, dear Lord,  
 of Thee.  
 The fragrant lily flower

Bows and fulfils Thy Will its lifelong  
hour ;

The lamb at rest and play  
Fulfils Thy Will in gladness all the  
day ;

They leave to-morrow's cares  
Until the morrow, what it brings it  
bears.

And I, Lord, would be such ;  
Not high or great or anxious over-  
much,

But pure and temperate,  
Earnest to do Thy Will betimes and  
late,

Fragrant with love and praise  
And innocence thro' all my appointed  
days ;

Thy lily I would be,  
Spotless and sweet, Thy lamb to  
follow Thee.

*Before 1886.*

When I was in trouble I called upon the  
Lord.

A BURDENED heart that bleeds and  
bears

And hopes and waits in pain,  
And faints beneath its fears and  
cares,  
Yet hopes again :

Wilt Thou accept the heart I bring,  
O gracious Lord and kind,  
To ease it of a torturing sting,  
And staunch and bind ?

Alas, if Thou wilt none of this,  
None else have I to give :  
Look Thou upon it as it is,  
Accept, relieve.

Or if Thou wilt not yet relieve,  
Be not extreme to sift ;  
Accept a faltering will to give,  
Itself Thy gift.

*Before 1886.*

GRANT us such grace that we may  
work Thy Will  
And speak Thy words and walk  
before Thy Face,  
Profound and calm, like waters deep  
and still :  
Grant us such grace.

Not hastening and not loitering  
in our pace  
For gloomiest valley or for sultriest  
hill,  
Content and fearless on our down-  
ward race.

As rivers seek a sea they cannot fill  
But are themselves filled full in  
its embrace,  
Absorbed, at rest, each river and  
each rill :

Grant us such grace.

*Before 1893.*

Who hath despised the day of small  
things ?

As violets so be I recluse and sweet  
Cheerful as daisies unaccounted  
rare,  
Still sunward-gazing from a lowly  
seat,  
Still sweetening wintry air.

While half-awakened Spring lags  
incomplete,  
While lofty forest trees tower  
bleak and bare,

Daisies and violets own remotest  
heat  
And bloom and make them fair.  
*Before 1893.*

'Do this, and he doeth it.'

CONTENT to come, content to go,  
Content to wrestle or to race,  
Content to know or not to know,  
Each in his place ;

Lord, grant us grace to love Thee so  
That glad of heart and glad of face  
At last we may sit, high or low,  
Each in his place ;

Where pleasures flow as rivers flow,  
And loss has left no barren trace,  
And all that are are perfect so,  
Each in his place.  
*Before 1893.*

'That no man take thy Crown.'

BE faithful unto death. Christ  
proffers thee  
Crown of a life that draws  
immortal breath :  
To thee He saith, yea and He saith  
to me,  
'Be faithful unto death.'

To' every living soul that same He  
saith,  
'Be faithful' :—whatsoever else we  
be,  
Let us be faithful, challenging His  
faith.

Tho' trouble storm around us like  
the sea,  
Tho' hell surge up to scare us and  
to scathe,

Tho' heaven and earth betake them-  
selves to flee,  
'Be faithful unto death.'  
*Before 1893.*

Ye are come unto Mount Sion.

FEAR, Faith, and Hope, have sent  
their hearts above :

Prudence, Obedience, and Hu-  
mility,

Climb at their call, all scaling  
heaven toward Love.

Fear hath least grace but great  
expediency ;

Faith and Humility show grave  
and strong ;

Prudence and Hope mount  
balanced equally.

Obedience marches marshalling  
their throng,

Goes first, goes last, to left hand  
or to right ;

And all the six uplift a pilgrim's  
song.

By day they rest not, nor they rest  
by night :

While Love within them, with  
them, over them,

Weans them and woos them from  
the dark to light.

Each plies for staff not reed with  
broken stem,

But olive branch in pledge of  
patient peace ;

Till Love being theirs in New  
Jerusalem

Transfigure them to Love, and so  
they cease.

Love is the sole beatitude above :  
All other graces, to their vast  
increase

Of glory, look on Love and mirror  
Love.

*Before 1893.*



Sit down in the lowest room.

LORD, give me grace  
To take the lowest place ;  
Nor even desire,  
Unless it be Thy Will, to go up  
higher.

Except by grace,  
I fail of lowest place ;  
Except desire  
Sit low, it aims awry to go up higher.

*Before 1893.*

Lord, it is good for us to be here.

GRANT us, O Lord, that patience  
and that faith :

Faith's patience imperturbable in  
Thee,

Hope's patience till the long-  
drawn shadows flee,

Love's patience unresentful of all  
scathe.

Verily we need patience breath by  
breath ;

Patience while Faith holds up her  
glass to see,

While Hope toils yoked in Fear's  
copartnery,

And Love goes softly on the way to  
death.

How gracious and how perfecting a  
grace

Must Patience be on which those  
others wait :

Faith with suspended rapture in her  
face,

Hope pale and careful hand in  
hand with Fear,

Love—ah good Love who would not  
antedate

God's Will, but saith, Good is it  
to be here.

*Before 1893.*

LORD, grant us grace to rest upon  
Thy word,  
To rest in hope until we see Thy  
Face ;

To rest thro' toil unruffled and un-  
stirred,

Lord, grant us grace.

This burden and this heat wear  
on apace :

Night comes, when sweeter than  
night's singing bird

Will swell the silence of our  
ended race.

Ah songs which flesh and blood  
have never heard

And cannot hear, songs of the  
silent place

Where rest remains ! Lord, slake  
our hope deferred,

Lord, grant us grace !

*Before 1893.*

## CHRISTMAS CAROLS

### I

WHOSO hears a chiming for Christ-  
mas at the highest

Hears a sound like Angels chant-  
ing in their glee,

Hears a sound like palm boughs  
waving in the highest,

Hears a sound like ripple of a  
crystal sea.

Sweeter than a prayer-bell for a  
saint in dying,

Sweeter than a death-bell for a  
saint at rest,

Music struck in Heaven with earth's  
faint replying,

'Life is good, and death is good,  
for Christ is Best.'

## 2

A holy heavenly chime  
Rings fulness in of time,  
And on His Mother's breast  
Our Lord God ever-Blest  
Is laid a Babe at rest.

Stoop, Spirits unused to stoop,  
Swoop, Angels, flying swoop,  
Adoring as you gaze,  
Uplifting hymns of praise :—  
'Grace to the Full of Grace!'

The cave is cold and strait  
To hold the angelic state :  
More strait it is, more cold,  
To foster and infold  
Its Maker one hour old.

Thrilled through with awestruck  
love,  
Meek Angels poised 'above,  
To see their God, look down :  
'What, is there never a Crown  
For Him in swaddled gown ?

'How comes He soft and weak  
With such a tender cheek,  
With such a soft small hand ?—  
The very Hand which spann'd  
Heaven when its girth was plann'd.

'How comes He with a voice  
Which is but baby-noise ?—  
That Voice which spake with might  
'Let there be light"—and light  
Sprang out before our sight.

'What need hath He of flesh  
Made flawless now afresh ?

What need of human heart ?—  
Heart that must bleed and smart,  
Choosing the better part.

'But see : His gracious smile  
Dismisses us a while  
To serve Him in His kin.  
Haste we, make haste, begin  
To fetch His brethren in.'

Like stars they flash and shoot,  
The Shepherds they salute :  
'Glory to God' they sing :  
'Good news of peace we bring,  
For Christ is born a King.'

## 3

Lo ! newborn Jesus  
Soft and weak and small,  
Wrapped in baby's bands  
By His Mother's hands,  
Lord God of all.

Lord God of Mary,  
Whom His Lips caress  
While He rocks to rest  
On her milky breast  
In helplessness.

Lord God of shepherds  
Flocking through the cold,  
Flocking through the dark  
To the only Ark,  
The only Fold.

Lord God of all things  
Be they near or far,  
Be they high or low ;  
Lord of storm and snow,  
Angel and star.

Lord God of all men,—  
 My Lord and my God!  
 Thou who lovest me,  
 Keep me close to Thee  
 By staff and rod.

Lo! newborn Jesus  
 Loving great and small,  
 Love's free Sacrifice,  
 Opening Arms and Eyes  
 To one and all.

*Circa 1887.*

### A HOPE CAROL

A NIGHT was near, a day was near;  
 Between a day and night  
 I heard sweet voices calling clear,  
 Calling me:  
 I heard a whirr of wing on wing,  
 But could not see the sight;  
 I long to see the birds that sing,  
 I long to see.

Below the stars, beyond the moon,  
 Between the night and day,  
 I heard a rising falling tune  
 Calling me:  
 I long to see the pipes and strings  
 Whereon such minstrels play;  
 I long to see each face that sings,  
 I long to see.

To-day or may be not to-day,  
 To-night or not to-night,  
 All voices that command or pray,  
 Calling me,  
 Shall kindle in my soul such fire  
 And in my eyes such light  
 That I shall see that heart's desire  
 I long to see.

*Before 1889.*

### CARDINAL NEWMAN

In the grave whither thou goest.

O WEARY Champion of the Cross, lie  
 still:

Sleep thou at length the all-  
 embracing sleep:

Long was thy sowing-day, rest  
 now and reap:

Thy fast was long, feast now thy  
 spirit's fill.

Yea take thy fill of love, because thy  
 will

Chose love not in the shallows but  
 the deep:

Thy tides were spring-tides, set  
 against the neap

Of calmer souls: thy flood rebuked  
 their rill.

Now night has come to thee—please  
 God, of rest:

So some time must it come to  
 every man;

To first and last, where many  
 last are first.

Now fixed and finished thine  
 eternal plan,

Thy best has done its best, thy  
 worst its worst:

Thy best its best, please God, thy  
 best its best.

*16 August 1890.*

### YEA I HAVE A GOODLY HERITAGE

My vineyard that is mine I have to  
 keep,

Pruning for fruit the pleasant twigs  
 and leaves.

Tend thou thy cornfield: one day  
thou shalt reap  
In joy thy ripened sheaves.

Or, if thine be an orchard, graft and  
prop  
Food-bearing trees each watered  
in its place:  
Or, if a garden, let it yield for crop  
Sweet herbs and herb of grace.—

But if my lot be sand where nothing  
grows?—

Nay who hath said it? Tune a  
thankful psalm:  
For, though thy desert bloom not as  
the rose,  
It yet can rear thy palm.

*Circa 1890.*

## A CANDLEMAS DIALOGUE

‘LOVE brought Me down: and can-  
not love make thee  
Carol for joy to Me?  
Hear cheerful robin carol from his  
tree,  
Who owes not half to Me  
I won for thee.’

‘Yea, Lord, I hear his carol’s word-  
less voice;  
And well may he rejoice  
Who hath not heard of death’s dis-  
cordant noise.  
So might I too rejoice  
With such a voice.’

True, thou hast compassed death:  
but hast not thou  
The tree of life’s own bough?

Am I not Life and Resurrection  
now?

My Cross, balm-bearing bough  
For such as thou.’

‘Ah me, Thy Cross!—but that  
seems far away;

Thy Cradle-song to-day  
I too would raise and worship Thee  
and pray:

Not empty, Lord, to-day  
Send me away.’

‘If thou wilt not go empty, spend  
thy store;

And I will give thee more,  
Yea, make thee ten times richer than  
before.

Give more and give yet more  
Out of thy store.’

‘Because Thou givest me Thyself, I  
will

Thy blessed word fulfil,  
Give with both hands, and hoard by  
giving still:

Thy pleasure to fulfil,  
And work Thy Will.’

*Before 1891.*

## MARY MAGDALENE AND THE OTHER MARY

### A SONG FOR ALL MARIES

OUR Master lies asleep and is at  
rest:

His Heart has ceased to bleed, His  
Eye to weep:

The sun ashamed has dropt down in  
the west:

Our Master lies asleep.

Now we are they who weep, and  
trembling keep  
Vigil, with wrung heart in a sighing  
breast,  
While slow time creeps, and slow  
the shadows creep.

Renew Thy youth, as eagle from the  
nest ;

O Master, who hast sown, arise to  
reap :—

No cock-crow yet, no flush on  
eastern crest :

Our Master lies asleep.

*Before 1891.*

#### A DEATH OF A FIRST-BORN

*(14 January 1892.)*

ONE young life lost, two happy  
young lives blighted,

With earthward eyes we see :

With eyes uplifted, keener, farther-  
sighted,

We look, O Lord, to Thee.

Grief hears a funeral knell : Hope  
hears the ringing

Of birthday bells on high ;

Faith, Hope, and Love, make answer  
with soft singing,

Half carol and half cry.

Stoop to console us, Christ, sole  
consolation,

While dust returns to dust ;

Until that blessed day when all Thy  
nation

Shall rise up of the Just.

*January 1892.*

#### FAINT YET PURSUING

I

BEYOND this shadow and this turbu-  
lent sea,

Shadow of death and turbulent  
sea of death,

Lies all we long to have or long to  
be.

Take heart, tired man, toil on  
with lessening breath,

Lay violent hands on heaven's high  
treasury,

Be what you long to be through  
life-long scathe.

A little while Hope leans on  
Charity,

A little while Charity heartens  
Faith :

A little while : and then what  
further while ?

One while that ends not and that  
wearies not,

For ever new whilst evermore  
the same.

All things made new bear each  
a sweet new name ;

Man's lot of death has turned to  
life his lot,

And tearful Charity to Love's own  
smile.

2

Press onward, quickened souls, who  
mounting move,

Press onward, upward, fire with  
mounting fire ;

Gathering volume of untold  
desire,

Press upward, homeward, dove with  
mounting dove.

Point me the excellent way that  
leads above ;

Woo me with sequent will, me  
too to aspire ;

With sequent heart to follow  
higher and higher,

To follow all who follow on to  
Love.

Up the high steep, across the golden  
sill,

Up out of shadows into very  
light,

Up out of dwindling life to life  
aglow,

I watch you, my beloved, out of  
sight ;—

Sight fails me, and my heart is  
watching still :

My heart fails, yet I follow on  
to know.

*Circa 1892.*

### THE WORLD. SELF-DESTRUCTION

*(Before 1893.)*

A vain Shadow.

THE world, — what a world, ah  
me !

Mouldy, worm-eaten, grey :

Vain as a leaf from a tree,

As a fading day,

As veriest vanity,

As the froth and the spray

Of the hollow-billowed sea,

As what was and shall not be,

As what is and passes away.

Lord, save us, we perish.

O LORD, seek us, O Lord, find us

In Thy patient care ;

Be Thy Love before, behind us,

Round us, everywhere :

Lest the god of this world blind us,

Lest he speak us fair,

Lest he forge a chain to bind us,

Lest he bait a snare.

Turn not from us, call to mind us,

Find, embrace us, bear ;

Be Thy Love before, behind us,

Round us, everywhere.

WHAT is this above thy head,

O Man ?—

The World, all overspread

With pearls and golden rays

And gems ablaze ;

A sight which day and night

Fills an eye's span.

What is this beneath thy feet,

O Saint ?—

The World, a nauseous sweet

Puffed up and perishing ;

A hollow thing,

A lie, a vanity,

Tinsel and paint.

What is she while time is  
time,

O Man ?—

In a perpetual prime

Beauty and youth she hath ;

And her footpath

Breeds flowers thro' dancing hours

Since time began.

While time lengthens what is she,  
O Saint?—

Nought : yea, all men shall see  
How she is nought at all,  
When her death-pall  
Of fire ends their desire  
And brands her taint.

Ah poor Man, befooled and slow  
And faint !

Ah poorest Man, if so  
Thou turn thy back on bliss  
And choose amiss !  
For thou art choosing now :  
Sinner,—or Saint.

Babylon the Great.

FOUL is she and ill-favoured, set  
askew :

Gaze not upon her till thou dream  
her fair,

Lest she should mesh thee in her  
wanton hair,

Adept in arts grown old yet ever  
new.

Her heart lusts not for love, but  
thro' and thro'

For blood, as spotted panther  
lusts in lair ;

No wine is in her cup, but filth is  
there

Unutterable, with plagues hid out of  
view.

Gaze not upon her, for her dancing  
whirl

Turns giddy the fixed gazer  
presently :

Gaze not upon her, lest thou be  
as she

When, at the far end of her long  
desire,

Her scarlet vest and gold and gem  
and pearl  
And she amid her pomp are set  
on fire.

Standing afar off for the fear of her torment.

Is this the end ? is there no end but  
this ?

Yea, none beside :  
No other end for pride  
And foulness and besottedness.

Hath she no friend ? hath she no  
clinging friend ?

Nay, none at all ;  
Who stare upon her fall  
Quake for themselves with hair on  
end.

Will she be done away ? vanish  
away ?

Yea, like a dream ;  
Yea, like the shades that seem  
Somewhat, and lo are nought by day.

Alas for her amid man's helpless  
moan,

Alas for her !  
She hath no comforter :  
In solitude of fire she sits alone.

O Lucifer, Son of the Morning !

O **FALLEN** star ! a darkened light,  
A glory hurtled from its car,  
Self-blasted from the holy height :  
O fallen star !

Fallen beyond earth's utmost bar,  
Beyond return, beyond far sight  
Of outmost glimmering nebular.



Now blackness, which once walked  
in white ;  
Now death, whose life once glowed  
afar ;  
O son of dawn that loved the night,  
O fallen star !

ALAS, alas ! for the self-destroyed  
Vanish as images from a glass,  
Sink down and die down by hope  
unbuoyed :—  
Alas, alas !

Who shall stay their ruinous  
mass ?  
Besotted, reckless, possessed, de-  
cayed,  
They hurry to the dolorous pass.  
Saints fall a-weeping who would  
have joyed,  
Sore they weep for a glory that  
was,  
For a fulness emptied into the void,  
Alas, alas !

As froth on the face of the deep,  
As foam on the crest of the sea,  
As dreams at the waking of sleep,  
As gourd of a day and a night,  
As harvest that no man shall reap,  
As vintage that never shall be,  
Is hope if it cling not aright,  
O my God, unto Thee.

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire  
is not quenched.

IN tempest and storm, blackness of  
darkness for ever,  
A fire unextinguished, a worm's  
indestructible swarm ;

Where no hope shall ever be more,  
and love shall be never,  
In tempest and storm ;  
Where the form of all things is  
fashionless, void of all form ;  
Where from death that severeth all,  
the soul cannot sever  
In tempest and storm.

TOLL, bell, toll. For hope is flying  
Sighing from the earthbound soul :  
Life is sighing, life is dying :  
Toll, bell, toll.

Gropes in its own grave the mole,  
Wedding darkness, undescriing,  
Tending to no different goal.

Self-slain soul, in vain thy sighing :  
Self-slain, who should make thee  
whole ?

Vain the clamour of thy crying :  
Toll, bell, toll.

## ALL THINGS

JESUS alone :—if thus it were to  
me ;

Yet thus it cannot be ;  
Lord, I have all things if I have  
but Thee.

Jesus and all :—precious His  
bounties are,

Yet He more precious far ;  
Day's-eyes are many, one the  
Morning Star.

Jesus my all :—so let me rest in love,  
Thy peaceable poor dove,  
Some time below till timeless time  
above.

*Before 1893.*

## HEAVEN OVERARCHES

HEAVEN overarches earth and sea,  
 Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness.  
 Heaven overarches you and me :  
 A little while and we shall be—  
 Please God—where there is no more  
     sea  
 Nor barren wilderness.

Heaven overarches you and me,  
 And all earth's gardens and her  
     graves.

Look up with me, until we see  
 The day break and the shadows  
     flee.

What though to-night wrecks you  
     and me

If so to-morrow saves ?

*Circa 1893.*

## GENERAL POEMS

## A PORTRAIT

## I

SHE gave up beauty in her tender  
     youth,  
 Gave all her hope and joy and  
     pleasant ways ;  
 She covered up her eyes lest they  
     should gaze  
 On vanity, and chose the bitter  
     truth.  
 Harsh towards herself, towards  
     others full of ruth,  
 Servant of servants, little known  
     to praise,  
 Long prayers and fasts trenched  
     on her nights and days :  
 She schooled herself to sights and  
     sounds uncouth  
 That with the poor and stricken she  
     might make  
 A home, until the least of all  
     sufficed

Her wants ; her own self learned  
     she to forsake,  
 Counting all earthly gain but hurt  
     and loss.

So with calm will she chose and  
     bore the cross

And hated all for love of Jesus  
     Christ.

*21 November 1850.*

## 2

They knelt in silent anguish by her  
     bed,

And could not weep ; but calmly  
     there she lay.

All pain had left her ; and the  
     sun's last ray

Shone through upon her, warming  
     into red

The shady curtains. In her heart  
     she said :

'Heaven opens ; I leave these  
     and go away ;

The Bridegroom calls,—shall the  
Bride seek to stay ?'

Then low upon her breast she bowed  
her head.

O lily flower, O gem of priceless  
worth,

O dove with patient voice and  
patient eyes,

O fruitful vine amid a land of  
dearth,

O maid replete with loving  
purities,

Thou bowedst down thy head with  
friends on earth

To raise it with the saints in  
Paradise.

24 February 1847.

THE WHOLE HEAD IS SICK  
AND THE WHOLE HEART  
FAINT.

WOE for the young who say that life  
is long,

Who turn from the sun-rising to  
the West,

Who feel no pleasure and can  
find no rest,

Who in the morning sigh for even-  
song.

Their hearts, weary because of this  
world's wrong,

Yearn with a thousand longings  
unexpressed ;

They have a wound no mortal  
ever drest,

An ill than all earth's remedies  
more strong.

For them the fount of gladness hath  
run dry,

And in all Nature is no pleasant  
thing ;

For them there is no glory in the  
sky,

No sweetness in the breezes' mur-  
muring :

They say, 'The peace of heaven is  
placed too high,

And this earth changeth and is  
perishing.'

6 December 1847.

## VANITY OF VANITIES

AH woe is me for pleasure that is  
vain,

Ah woe is me for glory that is  
past !

Pleasure that bringeth sorrow at  
the last,

Glory that at the last bringeth no  
gain.

So saith the sinking heart ; and so  
again

It shall say till the mighty angel-  
blast

Is blown, making the sun and  
moon aghast,

And showering down the stars like  
sudden rain.

And evermore men shall go fear-  
fully,

Bending beneath their weight of  
heaviness ;

And ancient men shall lie down  
wearily,

And strong men shall rise up in  
weariness :

Yea even the young shall answer  
sighingly,

Saying one to another 'How vain  
it is !'

1847.

## THREE STAGES

## I.—A PAUSE OF THOUGHT

I LOOKED for that which is not, nor  
can be,  
And hope deferred made my  
heart sick in truth :  
But years must pass before a hope  
of youth  
Is resigned utterly.

I watched and waited with a stead-  
fast will :  
And though the object seemed to  
flee away  
That I so longed for, ever day  
by day  
I watched and waited still.

Sometimes I said : 'This thing shall  
be no more ;  
My expectation wearies and shall  
cease ;  
I will resign it now and be at  
peace ' :  
Yet never gave it o'er.

Sometimes I said : 'It is an empty  
name  
I long for ; to a name why should  
I give  
The peace of all the days I have  
to live ? '—  
Yet gave it all the same.

Alas thou foolish one ! alike unfit  
For healthy joy and salutary pain :  
Thou knowest the chase useless,  
and again  
Turnest to follow it.

14 February 1848.

## 2.—THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

My happy happy dream is finished  
with,  
My dream in which alone I lived  
so long.  
My heart slept — woe is me, it  
wakeneth ;  
Was weak—I thought it strong.

Oh weary wakening from a life-true :  
dream !  
Oh pleasant dream from which I  
wake in pain !  
I rested all my trust on things that  
seem,  
And all my trust is vain.

I must pull down my palace that I  
built,  
Dig up the pleasure-gardens of  
my soul ;  
Must change my laughter to sad  
tears for guilt,  
My freedom to control.

Now all the cherished secrets of my  
heart,  
Now all my hidden hopes, are  
turned to sin.  
Part of my life is dead, part sick  
and part  
Is all on fire within.

The fruitless thought of what  
might have been,  
Haunting me ever, will not let  
me rest.  
A cold North wind has withered all  
my green,  
My sun is in the West.

But, where my palace stood, with  
 the same stone  
 I will uprear a shady hermitage :  
 And there my spirit shall keep house  
 alone,  
 Accomplishing its age.

There other garden-beds shall lie  
 around,  
 Full of sweet-briar and incense-  
 bearing thyme :  
 There I will sit, and listen for the  
 sound  
 Of the last lingering chime.  
*18 April 1849.*

## 3

I THOUGHT to deal the death-stroke  
 at a blow :  
 To give all, once for all, but never  
 more :—  
 Then sit to hear the low waves fret  
 the shore,  
 Or watch the silent snow.  
 'Oh rest,' I thought, 'in silence and  
 the dark :  
 Oh rest, if nothing else, from head to  
 feet :  
 Though I may see no more the  
 popped wheat,  
 Or sunny soaring lark.

These chimes are slow, but surely  
 strike at last :  
 This sand is slow, but surely drop-  
 peth through :  
 And much there is to suffer, much  
 to do,  
 Before the time be past.

So will I labour, but will not rejoice :  
 Will do and bear, but will not hope  
 again :

R

Gone dead alike to pulses of quick  
 pain  
 And pleasure's counterpoise.'

I said so in my heart: and so I  
 thought  
 My life would lapse, a tedious mono-  
 tone :  
 I thought to shut myself and dwell  
 alone  
 Unseeking and unsought.

But first I tired, and then my care  
 grew slack,  
 Till my heart dreamed, and maybe  
 wandered too :—  
 I felt the sunshine glow again, and  
 knew  
 The swallow on its track :

All birds awoke to building in the  
 leaves,  
 All buds awoke to fullness and sweet  
 scent :  
 Ah too my heart woke unawares,  
 intent  
 On fruitful harvest-sheaves.

Full pulse of life, that I had deemed  
 was dead ;  
 Full throb of youth, that I had  
 deemed at rest.  
 Alas I cannot build myself a nest,  
 I cannot crown my head

With royal purple blossoms for the  
 feast,  
 Nor flush with laughter, nor exult in  
 song :—  
 These joys may drift, as time now  
 drifts along ;  
 And cease, as once they ceased.

U

I may pursue, and yet may not attain,  
Athirst and panting all the days I  
live :

Or seem to hold, yet nerve myself to  
give

What once I gave, again.

25 *July* 1854.

### LADY MONTREVOR

I DO not look for love that is a  
dream—

I only seek for courage to be still ;  
To bear my grief with an unbend-  
ing will,

And when I am a-weary not to seem.  
Let the round world roll on ; let the  
sun beam ;

Let the wind blow, and let the  
rivers fill

The everlasting sea, and on the  
hill

The palms almost touch heaven, as  
children deem.

And, though young spring and  
summer pass away,

And autumn and cold winter come  
again,

And though my soul, being tired  
of its pain,

Pass from the ancient earth, and  
though my clay

Return to dust, my tongue shall  
not complain ;—

No man shall mock me after this my  
day.

18 *February* 1848.

### SONG

SHE sat and sang alway

By the green margin of a stream,  
Watching the fishes leap and play  
Beneath the glad sunbeam.

I sat and wept alway  
Beneath the moon's most shadowy  
beam,

Watching the blossoms of the May  
Weep leaves into the stream.

I wept for memory ;

She sang for hope that is so fair :

My tears were swallowed by the sea ;

Her songs died on the air.

26 *November* 1848.

### BITTER FOR SWEET

SUMMER is gone with all its roses,  
Its sun and perfumes and sweet  
flowers,

Its warm air and refreshing  
showers :

And even Autumn closes.

Yea, Autumn's chilly self is going,

And Winter comes which is yet  
colder ;

Each day the hoar-frost waxes  
bolder,

And the last buds cease  
blowing.

1 *December* 1848.

### SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,

Sing no sad songs for me ;

Plant thou no roses at my head,

Nor shady cypress tree :

Be the green grass above me

With showers and dewdrops wet.

And if thou wilt, remember,

And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,

I shall not feel the rain ;

I shall not hear the nightingale

Sing on as if in pain :

And dreaming through the twilight  
That doth not rise nor set,  
Haply I may remember,  
And haply may forget.

12 December 1848.

ON KEATS

A GARDEN in a garden: a green spot  
Where all is green: most fitting  
slumber-place  
For the strong man grown weary  
of a race

Soon over. Unto him a goodly lot  
Hath fallen in fertile ground; there  
thorns are not,

But his own daisies; silence, full  
of grace,

Surely hath shed a quiet on his  
face;

His earth is but sweet leaves that  
fall and rot.

What was his record of himself, ere  
he

Went from us? 'Here lies one  
whose name was writ

In water.' While the chilly  
shadows flit

Of sweet St. Agnes' Eve, while  
basil springs—

His name, in every humble heart  
that sings,

Shall be a fountain of love, verily.

18 January 1849 (Eve of St. Agnes).

HAVE PATIENCE

THE goblets all are broken,  
The pleasant wine is spilt,  
The songs cease. If thou wilt,  
Listen, and hear truth spoken.

We take thought for the morrow,  
And know not we shall see it;

We look on death with sorrow,  
And cannot flee it.

Youth passes like the lightning,  
Not to return again,—

Just for a little bright'ning

The confines of a plain,

Gilding the spires, and whit'ning

The gravestones and the slain.

Youth passes like the odour

From the white rose's cup

When the hot sun drinks up

The dew that overflowed her:

Then life forsakes the petals

That had been very fair;

No beauty lingers there,

And no bee settles.

But, when the rose is dead

And the leaves fallen,

And when the earth has spread

A snow-white pall on,

The thorn remains, once hidden

By the green growth above it—

A darksome guest unbidden,

With none to love it.

Manhood is turbulent,

And old age tires;

That hath no still content,

This no desires.

The present hath even less

Joy than the past,

And more cares fret it:—

Life is a weariness

From first to last—

Let us forget it:

Fill high and deep!—But how?

The goblets all are broken.

Nay then, have patience now:

For this is but a token

We soon shall have no need

Of such to cheer us;

The palm-branches decreed

And crowns to be our meed

Are very near us.

23 January 1849.



## SONG

OH roses for the flush of youth,  
And laurel for the perfect prime ;  
But pluck an ivy branch for me  
Grown old before my time.

Oh violets for the grave of youth,  
And bay for those dead in their  
prime ;  
Give me the withered leaves I chose  
Before in the old time.

6 February 1849.

## AN END

LOVE, strong as Death, is dead.  
Come, let us make his bed  
Among the dying flowers :  
A green turf at his head ;  
And a stone at his feet,  
Whereon we may sit  
In the quiet evening hours.

He was born in the spring,  
And died before the harvesting :  
On the last warm summer day  
He left us ; he would not stay  
For autumn twilight cold and grey.  
Sit we by his grave, and sing  
He is gone away.

To few chords and sad and low  
Sing we so :  
Be our eyes fixed on the grass  
Shadow-veiled as the years pass,  
While we think of all that was  
In the long ago.

5 March 1849.

## DREAM LAND

WHERE sunless rivers weep  
Their waves into the deep,

She sleeps a charmed sleep :  
Awake her not.  
Led by a single star,  
She came from very far  
To seek where shadows are  
Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,  
She left the fields of corn,  
For twilight cold and lorn  
And water springs.  
Through sleep, as through a veil,  
She sees the sky look pale,  
And hears the nightingale  
That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest  
Shed over brow and breast ;  
Her face is toward the west,  
The purple land.  
She cannot see the grain  
Ripening on hill and plain,  
She cannot feel the rain  
Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore  
Upon a mossy shore ;  
Rest, rest at the heart's core  
Till time shall cease :  
Sleep that no pain shall wake ;  
Night that no morn shall break,  
Till joy shall overtake  
Her perfect peace.

April 1849.

## AFTER DEATH

THE curtains were half drawn, the  
floor was swept  
And strewn with rushes, rosemary  
and may  
Lay thick upon the bed on which  
I lay,

Where through the lattice ivy-  
shadows crept.

He leaned above me, thinking that  
I slept

And could not hear him ; but I  
heard him say,

'Poor child, poor child': and as  
he turned away

Came a deep silence, and I knew he  
wept.

He did not touch the shroud, or  
raise the fold

That hid my face, or take my  
hand in his,

Or ruffle the smooth pillows for  
my head :

He did not love me living ; but  
once dead

He pitied me ; and very sweet it  
is

To know he still is warm though I  
am cold.

28 April 1849.

# REST

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes ;  
Seal her sweet eyes weary of  
watching, Earth ;

Lie close around her ; leave no  
room for mirth

With its harsh laughter, nor for  
sound of sighs.

She hath no questions, she hath no  
replies,

Hushed in and curtained with a  
blessed dearth

Of all that irked her from the  
hour of birth ;

With stillness that is almost Paradise.  
Darkness more clear than noonday

holdeth her,

Silence more musical than any  
song ;

Even her very heart has ceased to  
stir :

Until the morning of Eternity

Her rest shall not begin nor end,  
but be ;

And when she wakes she will not  
think it long.

15 May 1849.

# LOOKING FORWARD

SLEEP, let me sleep, for I am sick  
of care ;

Sleep, let me sleep, for my pain  
wearies me.

Shut out the light ; thicken the heavy  
air

With drowsy incense ; let a distant  
stream

Of music lull me, languid as a dream,  
Soft as the whisper of a summer  
sea.

Pluck me no rose that groweth on a  
thorn,

Nor myrtle white and cold as snow  
in June,

Fit for a virgin on her marriage  
morn :

But bring me poppies brimmed with  
sleepy death,

And ivy choking what it garlandeth,  
And primroses that open to the  
moon.

Listen, the music swells into a song,  
A simple song I loved in days of  
yore ;

The echoes take it up and up along  
The hills, and the wind blows it  
back again.—

Peace, peace, there is a memory in  
that strain

Of happy days that shall return  
no more.

Oh peace! your music wakeneth  
 old thought,  
 But not old hope that made my  
 life so sweet,  
 Only the longing that must end in  
 nought.  
 Have patience with me, friends, a  
 little while :  
 For soon, where you shall dance and  
 sing and smile,  
 My quickened dust may blossom  
 at your feet.

Sweet thought that I may yet live  
 and grow green,  
 That leaves may yet spring from  
 the withered root,  
 And buds and flowers and berries  
 half unseen.  
 Then, if you haply muse upon the  
 past,  
 Say this: Poor child, she has her  
 wish at last ;  
 Barren through life, but in death  
 bearing fruit.

8 June 1849.

### LIFE HIDDEN

ROSES and lilies grow above the  
 place  
 Where she sleeps the long sleep  
 that doth not dream.  
 If we could look upon her hidden face,  
 Nor shadow would be there, nor  
 garish gleam  
 Of light ; her life is lapsing like  
 a stream  
 That makes no noise but floweth on  
 apace  
 Seawards, while many a shade  
 and shady beam  
 Vary the ripples in their gliding  
 chase.

She doth not see, but knows ; she  
 doth not feel,  
 And yet is sensible ; she hears no  
 sound,  
 Yet counts the flight of time  
 and doth not err.  
 Peace far and near, peace to  
 ourselves and her :  
 Her body is at peace in holy  
 ground,  
 Her spirit is at peace where Angels  
 kneel.

23 July 1849.

### REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone  
 away,  
 Gone far away into the silent land ;  
 When you can no more hold me  
 by the hand,  
 Nor I half turn to go yet turning  
 stay.  
 Remember me when no more day  
 by day  
 You tell me of our future that you  
 plann'd :  
 Only remember me ; you under-  
 stand  
 It will be late to counsel then or  
 pray.  
 Yet if you should forget me for a  
 while  
 And afterwards remember, do not  
 grieve :  
 For if the darkness and corruption  
 leave  
 A vestige of the thoughts that  
 once I had,  
 Better by far you should forget and  
 smile  
 Than that you should remember  
 and be sad.

25 July 1849.

## SOUND SLEEP

SOME are laughing, some are weeping ;  
 She is sleeping, only sleeping.  
 Round her rest wild flowers are  
 creeping ;  
 There the wind is heaping, heaping  
 Sweetest sweets of Summer's keeping,  
 By the corn-fields ripe for reaping.

There are lilies, and there blushes  
 The deep rose, and there the  
 thrushes  
 Sing till latest sunlight flushes  
 In the west ; a fresh wind brushes  
 Through the leaves while evening  
 hushes.

There by day the lark is singing  
 And the grass and weeds are  
 springing ;  
 There by night the bat is winging ;  
 There for ever winds are bringing  
 Far-off chimes of church-bells ringing.

Night and morning, noon and even,  
 Their sound fills her dreams with  
 Heaven :

The long strife at length is striven :  
 Till her grave-bands shall be riven,  
 Such is the good portion given  
 To her soul at rest and shriven.

13 August 1849.

## QUEEN ROSE

THE jessamine shows like a star ;  
 The lilies sway like sceptres slim ;  
 Fair clematis from near and far  
 Sets forth its wayward tangled  
 whim ;

Curved meadowsweet blooms rich  
 and dim ;—  
 But yet a rose is fairer far.

The jessamine is odorous ; so  
 Maid-lilies are, and clematis ;  
 And where tall meadowsweet-flowers  
 grow  
 A rare and subtle perfume is ;—  
 What can there be more choice  
 than these ?—

A rose when it doth bud and blow.

Let others choose sweet jessamine,  
 Or weave their lily-crown aright,  
 And let who love it pluck and twine  
 Loose clematis, or draw delight  
 From meadowsweets' cluster  
 downy white—

The rose, the perfect rose, be mine.

16 August 1849.

## HOW ONE CHOSE

'BEYOND the sea, in a green land  
 Where only rivers are—  
 Beyond the clouds, in the clear sky  
 Close by some quiet star—  
 Could you not fancy there might be  
 A home, Beloved, for you and me ?'

'If there were such a home, my  
 Friend,  
 Truly prepared for us,  
 Full of palm-branches, or of crowns  
 Sun-gemmed and glorious,  
 How should we reach it ? Let us  
 cease

From longing ; let us be at peace.'

'The nightingale sang yestereve ;  
 A sweet song singeth she,  
 Most sad and without any hope,  
 And full of memory ;

But still methought it seemed to  
speak  
To me of home, and bid me seek.'

'The nightingale ceased ere the  
morn :

Her heart could not contain  
The passion of her song, but burst  
With the long throbbing pain.  
Now she hath rest which is the best,  
And now I too would be at rest.'

'Last night I watched the mounting  
moon :

Her glory was too pale  
To shine through the black heavy  
clouds

That wrapt her like a veil ;  
And yet with patience she passed  
through  
The mists, and reached the depths  
of blue.'

'And when the road was travelled  
o'er

And when the goal was won,  
A little while and all her light  
Was swallowed by the sun :  
The weary moon must seek again,—  
Even so our search would be in vain.'

'Yet seek with me. And if our way  
Be long and troublesome,  
And if our noon be hot until  
The chilly shadows come  
Of evening,—till those shadows flee  
In dawn, think, Love, it is with me.'

'Nay, seek alone : I am no mate  
For such as you, in truth :  
My heart is old before its time ;  
Yours yet is in its youth :  
This home with pleasures girt about  
Seek you, for I am wearied out.'

6 October 1849.

## SEEKING REST

My Mother said : 'The child is  
changed

That used to be so still ;  
All the day long she sings and sings,  
And seems to think no ill ;  
She laughs as if some inward joy  
Her heart would overfill.'

My Sisters said : 'Now prythee tell  
Thy secret unto us :  
Let us rejoice with thee ; for all  
Is surely prosperous,  
Thou art so merry : tell us, Sweet :  
We had not used thee thus.'

My Mother says : 'What ails the  
child

Lately so blythe of cheer ?  
Art sick or sorry ? Nay, it is  
The winter of the year ;  
Wait till the Springtime comes  
again,  
And the sweet flowers appear.'

My Sisters say : 'Come, sit with us,  
That we may weep with thee :  
Show us thy grief that we may  
grieve :

Yea haply, if we see  
Thy sorrow, we may ease it ; but  
Shall share it certainly.'

How should I share my pain, who  
kept

My pleasure all my own ?  
My Spring will never come again ;  
My pretty flowers have blown  
For the last time ; I can but sit  
And think and weep alone.

10 October 1849.

ENDURANCE

YES, I too could face death and  
never shrink.

But it is harder to bear hated  
life ;

To strive with hands and knees  
weary of strife ;

To drag the heavy chain whose  
every link

Galls to the bone ; to stand upon  
the brink

Of the deep grave, nor drowse  
tho' it be rife

With sleep ; to hold with steady  
hand the knife

Nor strike home :—this is courage,  
as I think.

Surely to suffer is more than to  
do.

To do is quickly done : to suffer is  
Longer and fuller of heart-  
sicknesses.

Each day's experience testifies of  
this.

Good deeds are many, but good  
lives are few :

Thousands taste the full cup ;  
who drains the lees ?

*Circa 1850.*

WITHERING

FADE, tender lily,

Fade, O crimson rose,

Fade every flower,

Sweetest flower that blows.

Go, chilly autumn,

Come, O winter cold ;

Let the green stalks die away

Into common mould,

Birth follows hard on death,

Life on withering :

Hasten, we will come the sooner

Back to pleasant spring.

*Circa 1850.*

TWILIGHT CALM

OH pleasant eventide !

Clouds on the western side

Grow grey and greyer, hiding the  
warm sun :

The bees and birds, their happy  
labours done,

Seek their close nests and bide.

Screened in the leafy wood

The stock-doves sit and brood :

The very squirrel leaps from bough  
to bough

But lazily ; pauses ; and settles now  
Where once he stored his food.

One by one the flowers close,

Lily and dewy rose

Shutting their tender petals from the  
moon :

The grasshoppers are still ; but not  
so soon

Are still the noisy crows.

The dormouse squats and eats

Choice little dainty bits

Beneath the spreading roots of a  
broad lime ;

Nibbling his fill he stops from time  
to time

And listens where he sits.

From far the lowings come

Of cattle driven home :

From farther still the wind brings  
fitfully

The vast continual murmur of the  
 sea,  
 Now loud, now almost dumb.

The gnats whirl in the air,  
 The evening gnats ; and there  
 The owl opes broad his eyes and  
 wings to sail  
 For prey ; the bat wakes ; and the  
 shell-less snail  
 Comes forth, clammy and bare.

Hark ! that's the nightingale,  
 Telling the self-same tale  
 Her song told when this ancient  
 earth was young :  
 So echoes answered when her song  
 was sung  
 In the first wooded vale.

We call it love and pain,  
 The passion of her strain ;  
 And yet we little understand or  
 know :  
 Why should it not be rather joy that  
 so  
 Throbs in each throbbing vein ?

In separate herds the deer  
 Lie ; here the bucks, and here  
 The does, and by its mother sleeps  
 the fawn :  
 Through all the hours of night until  
 the dawn  
 They sleep, forgetting fear.

The hare sleeps where it lies,  
 With wary half-closed eyes ;  
 The cock has ceased to crow, the  
 hen to cluck :  
 Only the fox is out, some heedless  
 duck  
 Or chicken to surprise.

Remote, each single star  
 Comes out, till there they are  
 All shining brightly. How the dews  
 fall damp !

While close at hand the glow-worm  
 lights her lamp,  
 Or twinkles from afar.

But evening now is done  
 As much as if the sun  
 Day-giving had arisen in the East—  
 For night has come ; and the great  
 calm has ceased,  
 The quiet sands have run.

7 February 1850.

## TWO THOUGHTS OF DEATH

### I

HER heart that loved me once is  
 rottenness  
 Now and corruption ; and her  
 life is dead  
 That was to have been one with  
 mine, she said.  
 The earth must lie with such a cruel  
 stress  
 On eyes whereon the white lids  
 used to press ;  
 Foul worms fill up her mouth so  
 sweet and red ;  
 Foul worms are underneath her  
 graceful head ;  
 Yet these, being born of her from  
 nothingness,  
 These worms are certainly flesh of  
 her flesh.—  
 How is it that the grass is rank  
 and green  
 And the dew-dropping rose is brave  
 and fresh  
 Above what was so sweeter far than  
 they ?



Even as her beauty hath passed  
quite away,  
Theirs too shall be as though it  
had not been.

## 2

So I said underneath the dusky  
trees :  
But, because still I loved her  
memory,  
I stooped to pluck a pale anemone,  
And lo my hand lighted upon  
heartsease  
Not fully blown : while with new  
life from these  
Fluttered a starry moth that  
rapidly  
Rose toward the sun : sunlighted  
flashed on me  
Its wings that seemed to throb like  
heart-pulses.  
Far far away it flew, far out of  
sight,—  
From earth and flowers of earth  
it passed away  
As though it flew straight up into  
the light.  
Then my heart answered me :  
Thou fool, to say  
That she is dead whose night is  
turned to day,  
And no more shall her day turn  
back to night.  
16 March 1850.

## THREE MOMENTS

THE Child said : 'Pretty bird,  
Come back and play with me.'  
The Bird said : 'It is in vain,  
For I am free.  
I am free, I will not stay,  
But will fly far away,

In the woods to sing and play,  
Far away, far away.'  
The Child sought her Mother :  
'I have lost my bird,' said she,  
Weeping bitterly.  
But the Mother made her answer,  
Half sighing pityingly,  
Half smiling cheerily :  
'Though thy bird come nevermore,  
Do not weep ;  
Find another playfellow,  
Child, and keep  
Tears for future pain more deep.'

'Sweet rose, do not wither,'  
The Girl said.  
But a blight had touched its heart  
And it drooped its crimson head.  
In the morning it had opened  
Full of life and bloom,  
But the leaves fell one by one  
Till the twilight gloom.  
One by one the leaves fell  
By summer winds blown from their  
stem ;  
They fell upon the dewy earth  
Which nourished once now tainted  
them.  
Again the young Girl wept  
And sought her Mother's ear :  
'My rose is dead so full of grace,  
The very rose I meant to place  
In the wreath that I wear.'  
'Nay, never weep for such as this,'  
The Mother answered her :  
'But weave another crown, less fair  
Perhaps, but fitter for thy hair.  
And keep thy tears,' the Mother  
said,  
'For something heavier.'

The Woman knelt, but did not  
pray  
Nor weep nor cry ; she only said,

'Not this, not this!' and clasped  
her hands  
Against her heart, and bowed her  
head,

While the great struggle shook the  
bed.

'Not this, not this!' tears did not  
fall;

'Not this!' it was all  
She could say; no sobs would come;  
The mortal grief was almost dumb.—  
At length when it was over, when  
She knew it was and would be so,  
She cried: 'O Mother, where are  
they,

The tears that used to flow  
So easily? One single drop  
Might save my reason now, or stop  
My heart from breaking. Blessed  
tears

Wasted in former years!'   
Then the grave Mother made reply:  
'O Daughter mine, be of good cheer,  
Rejoicing thou canst shed no tear.  
Thy pain is almost over now.  
Once more thy heart shall throb  
with pain,

But then shall never throb again.  
Oh happy thou who canst not weep,  
Oh happy thou!'

23 March 1850.

### IS AND WAS

SHE was whiter than the ermine  
That half shadowed neck and  
hand,

And her tresses were more golden  
Than their golden band;  
Snowy ostrich plumes she wore;  
Yet I almost loved her more  
In the simple time before.

Then she plucked the stately lilies,  
Knowing not she was more fair,  
And she listened to the skylark  
In the morning air.  
Then, a kerchief all her crown,  
She looked for the acorns brown,  
Bent their bough, and shook them  
down.

Then she thought of Christmas holly  
And of Maybloom in sweet May;  
Then she loved to pick the cherries  
And to turn the hay.  
She was humble then and meek,  
And the blush upon her cheek  
Told of much she could not speak.

Now she is a noble lady  
With calm voice not over loud;  
Very courteous in her action,

Yet you think her proud;  
Much too haughty to affect;  
Too indifferent to direct  
Or be angry or suspect;  
Doing all from self-respect.

*Spring 1850.*

### SONG

WE buried her among the flowers  
At falling of the leaf,  
And choked back all our tears; her  
joy  
Could never be our grief.

She lies among the living flowers  
And grass, the only thing  
That perishes;—or is it that  
Our Autumn was her Spring?

Doubtless, if we could see her face,  
The smile is settled there  
Which almost broke our hearts when  
last  
We knelt by her in prayer;

When, with tired eyes and failing  
breath

And hands crossed on her breast,  
Perhaps she saw her Guardian spread  
His wings above her rest.

So she sleeps hidden in the flowers;  
But yet a little while,  
And we shall see her wake and rise,  
Fair, with the self-same smile.

14 May 1850.

### ANNIE

ANNIE is fairer than her kith  
And kinder than her kin:  
Her eyes are like the open heaven  
Holy and pure from sin:  
Her heart is like an ordered house  
Good fairies harbour in:  
Oh happy he who wins the love  
That I can never win!

Her sisters stand as hyacinths  
Around the perfect rose:  
They bloom and open to the full,  
My bud will scarce uncloze.  
They are for every butterfly  
That comes and sips and goes:  
My bud hides in the tender green  
Most sweet and hardly shows.

Oh cruel kindness in soft eyes  
That are no more than kind,  
On which I gaze my heart away  
Till the tears make me blind!  
How is it others find the way  
That I can never find  
To make her laugh that sweetest  
laugh  
Which leaves all else behind?

Her hair is like the golden corn  
A low wind breathes upon:

Or like the golden harvest-moon  
When all the mists are gone:  
Or like a stream with golden sands  
On which the sun has shone  
Day after day in summertime  
Ere autumn leaves are wan.

I will not tell her that I love,  
Lest she should turn away  
With sorrow in her tender heart  
Which now is light and gay.  
I will not tell her that I love,  
Lest she should turn and say  
That we must meet no more again  
For many a weary day.

26 September 1850.

### A DIRGE

SHE was as sweet as violets in the  
Spring,  
As fair as any rose in Summertime:  
But frail are roses in their prime  
And violets in their blossoming.  
Even so was she:  
And now she lies,  
The earth upon her fast-closed  
eyes,  
Dead in the darkness silently.

The sweet Spring violets never bud  
again,  
The roses bloom and perish in a  
morn:  
They see no second quickening lying  
lorn:  
Their beauty dies as though in  
vain.  
Must she die so  
For evermore,  
Cold as the sand upon the shore,  
As passionless for joy and woe?—

Nay she is worth much more than  
 flowers that fade,  
 And yet shall be made fair with  
 purple fruit :

Branch of the Living Vine, whose  
 Root

From all eternity is laid.

Another Sun

Than this of ours

Has withered up indeed her  
 flowers

But ripened her grapes every one.

18 January 1851.

### A SUMMER WISH

LIVE all thy sweet life through,

Sweet Rose, dew-sprent,

Drop down thine evening dew,

To gather it anew

When day is bright :

I fancy thou wast meant  
 Chiefly to give delight.

Sing in the silent sky,

Glad soaring bird ;

Sing out thy notes on high

To sunbeam straying by

Or passing cloud ;

Heedless if thou art heard,  
 Sing thy full song aloud.

Oh that it were with me

As with the flower !

Blooming on its own tree

For butterfly and bee

Its summer morns :

That I might bloom mine hour,  
 A rose in spite of thorns.

Oh that my work were done

As birds' that soar

Rejoicing in the sun :

That when my time is run  
 And daylight too,

I so might rest once more  
 Cool with refreshing dew.

21 June 1851.

### SONG

It is not for her even brow

And shining yellow hair,

But it is for her tender eyes

I think my love so fair :

Her tell-tale eyes that smile and  
 weep

As frankly as they wake and sleep.

It is not for her rounded cheek

I love and fain would win,

But it is for the blush that comes

Straight from the heart within :

The honest blush of maiden shame

That blushes without thought of  
 blame.

So in my dreams I never hear

Her song, although she sings

As if a choir of spirits swept

From earth with throbbing  
 wings :

I only hear the simple voice

Whose love makes many hearts  
 rejoice.

1851.

### A FAIR WORLD THOUGH A FALLEN

YOU tell me that the world is fair,  
 in spite

Of the old Fall ; and that I  
 should not turn

So to the grave, and let my spirit  
 yearn.

After the quiet of the long last  
night.

Have I then shut mine eyes against  
the light,

Grief-deafened lest my spirit  
should discern?

Yet how could I keep silence  
when I burn?

And who can give me comfort?—  
Hear the right.

Have patience with the weak and  
sick at heart:

Bind up the wounded with a  
tender touch,

Comfort the sad, tear-blinded  
as they go:—

For, though I failed to choose the  
better part,

Were it a less unutterable woe

If we should come to love this  
world too much?

30 August 1851.

## BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS

'It is enough, enough,' one said,  
At play among the flowers:

'I spy a rose upon the thorn,  
A rainbow in the showers;

I hear a merry chime of bells  
Ring out the passing hours.'

Soft springs the fountain

From the daisied ground,

Softly falling on the moss

Without a sound.

'It is enough,' she said, and fixed  
Calm eyes upon the sky:

'I watch a flitting tender cloud  
Just like a dove go by;

A lark is rising from the grass,

A wren is building nigh.'

Softly the fountain  
Threads its silver way,  
Screened by the scented bloom  
Of whitest May.

'Enough?' she whispered to her-  
self,

As doubting: 'Is it so?

Enough to wear the roses fair,

Oh sweetest flowers that blow?

Oh yes, it surely is enough—

My happy home below!'

A shadow stretcheth

From the hither shore:

The waters darken

More and more and more.

'It is enough,' she says; but with  
A listless weary moan:

'Enough,' if mixing with her  
friends:

'Enough,' if left alone;

But to herself: 'Not yet enough

This suffering, to atone?'

The cold black waters

Seem to stagnate there,

Without a single wave

Or breath of air.

And now she says: 'It is enough,'  
Half languid and half stirred:

'Enough,' to silence and to  
sound,

'Thorn, blossom, soaring bird:

'Enough,' she says; but with a  
lack

Of something in the word.

Defiled and turbid

See the waters pass,

Half light, half shadow,

Struggling through the grass.

Ah will it ever dawn, that day

When, calm for good or ill,

Her heart shall say : ' It is enough,  
 For Thou art with me still ;  
 It is enough, O Lord my God,  
 Thine only blessed Will ' ?  
 Then shall the fountain sing  
 And flow to rest,  
 Clear as the sun-track  
 To the purple West.  
*26 August 1852.*

### THE SUMMER IS ENDED

WREATHE no more lilies in my  
 hair,  
 For I am dying, Sister sweet :  
 Or, if you will for the last time  
 Indeed, why make me fair  
 Once for my winding-sheet.

Pluck no more roses for my breast, .  
 For I like them fade in my prime :  
 Or, if you will, why pluck them  
 still,  
 That they may share my rest  
 Once more for the last time,

Weep not for me when I am gone,  
 Dear tender one, but hope and  
 smile :  
 Or, if you cannot choose but weep,  
 A little while weep on,  
 Only a little while.  
*11 September 1852.*

### AFTER ALL

' I THOUGHT your search was over.'  
 — ' So I thought.'  
 ' But you are seeking still,' — ' Yes,  
 even so :  
 Still seeking in mine own despite  
 below

That which in heaven alone is found  
 unsought :  
 Still spending for that thing which is  
 not bought.'  
 ' Then chase no more this shifting  
 empty show.' —  
 ' Amen : so bid a drowning man  
 forego  
 The straw he clutches : will he so  
 be taught ?  
 You have a home where peace broods  
 like a dove,  
 Screened from the weary world's  
 loud discontent :  
 You have home here : you wait for  
 home above.  
 I must unlearn the pleasant ways  
 I went :  
 Must learn another hope, another  
 love,  
 And sigh indeed for home in  
 banishment.'  
*24 October 1852.*

### FROM THE ANTIQUE

THE wind shall lull us yet,  
 The flowers shall spring above  
 us :  
 And those who hate forget,  
 And those forget who love us.  
 The pulse of hope shall cease,  
 Of joy and of regretting :  
 We twain shall sleep in peace,  
 Forgotten and forgetting.

For us no sun shall rise,  
 Nor wind rejoice, nor river,  
 Where we with fast-closed eyes  
 Shall sleep and sleep for ever.  
*10 December 1852.*



TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THIS  
WASTE ?

A WINDY shell singing upon the  
shore :

A lily budding in a desert place,  
Blooming alone  
With no companion

To praise its perfect perfume and  
its grace :

A rose crimson and blushing at the  
core,

Hedged-in with thorns behind it and  
before :

A fountain in the grass,  
Whose shadowy waters pass  
Only to nourish birds and furnish  
food

For squirrels of the wood :  
An oak deep in the forest's heart,  
the house

Of black-eyed tiny mouse :  
Its strong roots, fit for fuel, roofing  
in

The hoarded nuts, acorns, and  
grains of wheat—

Shutting them from the wind and  
scorching heat,

And sheltering them when the rains  
begin :

A precious pearl deep-buried in the  
sea

Where none save fishes be :  
The fullest merriest note

For which the skylark strains his  
silver throat,

Heard only in the sky  
By other birds that fitfully

Chase one another as they fly :  
The ripest plum down-tumbled to  
the ground

By southern winds most musical of  
sound,

R

But by no thirsty traveller found :  
Honey of wild bees in their ordered  
cells

Stored, not for human mouths to  
taste :—

I said smiling superior down : What  
waste

Of good, where no man dwells !

This I said on a pleasant day in June  
Before the sun had set, though a  
white moon

Already flaked the quiet blue  
Which not a star looked through.

But still the air was warm, and  
drowsily

It blew into my face :  
So, since that same day I had  
wandered deep

Into the country, I sought out a  
place

For rest beneath a tree,  
And very soon forgot myself in sleep :  
Not so mine own words had forgotten  
me.

Mine eyes were open to behold  
All hidden things,

And mine ears heard all secret  
whisperings :

So my proud tongue, that had  
been bold

To carp and to reprove,  
Was silenced by the force of utter  
Love.

All voices of all things inanimate  
Join with the song of Angels and  
the song

Of blessed spirits, chiming with  
Their Hallelujahs. One wind wak-  
eneth

Across the sleeping sea, crisping  
along

X



The waves, and brushes through the  
great  
Forests and tangled hedges, and  
calls out

Of rivers a clear sound,  
And makes the ripe corn rustle on  
the ground,

And murmurs in a shell :

Till all their voices swell

Above the clouds in one loud hymn

Joining the song of Seraphim,  
Or like pure incense circle round  
about

The walls of heaven, or like a well-  
spring rise

In shady Paradise.

A lily blossoming unseen

Holds honey in its silver cup

Whereon a bee may sup,

Till being full she takes the rest

And stores it in her waxen nest :

While the fair blossom lifted up

On its one stately stem of green

Is type of her the Undeified,

Arrayed in white, whose eyes are  
mild

As a white dove's, whose garment is

Blood-cleansed from all impurities

And earthly taints,

Her robe the righteousness of  
Saints.

And other eyes than ours

Were made to look on flowers,

Eyes of small birds and insects  
small :

The deep sun-blushing rose

Round which the prickles close

Opens her bosom to them all.

The tiniest living thing

That soars on feathered wing,

Or crawls among the long grass out  
of sight,

Has just as good a right  
To its appointed portion of delight  
As any King.

Why should we grudge a hidden  
water-stream

To birds and squirrels while we have  
enough ?

As if a nightingale should cease to  
sing

Lest we should hear, or finch leafed  
out of sight

Warbling its fill in summer light :

As if sweet violets in the Spring

Should cease to blow, for fear our  
path should seem

Less weary or less rough.

So every oak that stands a house  
For skilful mouse

And year by year renews its  
strength,

Shakes acorns from a hundred  
boughs

Which shall be oaks at length.

Who hath weighed the waters and  
shall say

What is hidden in the depths from  
day ?

Pearls and precious stones and  
golden sands,

Wondrous weeds and blossoms  
rare,

Kept back from human hands,

But good and fair,

A silent praise as pain is silent  
prayer.

A hymn and incense rising toward  
the skies,

As our whole life should rise :

An offering without stint from earth  
below,

Which Love accepteth so.

Thus is it with a warbling bird  
With fruit bloom-ripe and full of  
seed,

With honey which the wild bees  
draw

From flowers, and store for future  
need

By a perpetual law.

We want the faith that hath not  
seen

Indeed, but hath believed His  
truth

Who witnessed that His work was  
good :

So we pass cold to age from youth.

Alas for us, for we have heard

And known, but have not under-  
stood !

O earth, earth, earth, thou yet shalt  
bow

Who art so fair and lifted up,

Thou yet shalt drain the bitter cup.

Men's eyes that wait upon thee  
now,

All eyes shall see thee lost and  
mean,

Exposed and valued at thy worth,

While thou shalt stand ashamed  
and dumb.—

Ah when the Son of Man shall  
come,

Shall He find faith upon the earth?

*22 January 1853.*

### NEXT OF KIN

THE shadows gather round me,  
while you are in the sun :

My day is almost ended, but yours  
is just begun :

The winds are singing to us both and  
the streams are singing still,

And they fill your heart with music,  
but mine they cannot fill.

Your home is built in sunlight,  
mine in another day :

Your home is close at hand, sweet  
friend, but mine is far away :

Your bark is in the haven where  
you fain would be :

I must launch out into the deep,  
across the unknown sea.

You, white as dove or lily or spirit  
of the light :

I, stained and cold and glad to hide  
in the cold dark night :

You, joy to many a loving heart and  
light to many eyes :

I, lonely in the knowledge earth is  
full of vanities.

Yet when your day is over, as mine  
is nearly done,

And when your race is finished,  
as mine is almost run,

You, like me, shall cross your hands  
and bow your graceful head :

Yea, we twain shall sleep together in  
an equal bed.

*21 February 1853.*

### FOR ROSALINE'S ALBUM

Do you hear the low winds singing,  
And streams singing on their  
bed ?—

Very distant bells are ringing  
In a chapel for the dead :—  
Death-pale better than life-red.

Mother, come to me in rest,  
And bring little May to see.  
Shall I bid no other guest ?

Seven slow nights have passed away  
Over my forgotten clay :

None must come save you and  
she.

*February 1853.*

### WHAT?

STRENGTHENING as secret manna,  
Fostering as clouds above,  
Kind as a hovering dove,  
Full as a plenteous river,  
Our glory and our banner  
For ever and for ever.

Dear as a dying cadence  
Of music in the drowsy night :  
Fair as the flowers which maidens  
Pluck for an hour's delight,  
And then forget them quite.

Gay as a cowslip-meadow  
Fresh opening to the sun  
When new day is begun :  
Soft as a sunny shadow  
When day is almost done.

Glorious as purple twilight,  
Pleasant as budding tree,  
Untouched as any islet  
Shrined in an unknown sea :  
Sweet as a fragrant rose amid the  
dew :—  
As sweet, as fruitless too.

A bitter dream to wake from,  
But oh how pleasant while we  
dream !  
A poisoned fount to take from,  
But oh how sweet the stream !  
*May 1853.*

### A PAUSE

THEY made the chamber sweet with  
flowers and leaves,  
And the bed sweet with flowers on  
which I lay ;  
While my soul, love-bound, loitered  
on its way.

I did not hear the birds about the  
eaves,

Nor hear the reapers talk among  
the sheaves :

Only my soul kept watch from  
day to day,

My thirsty soul kept watch for one  
away :—

Perhaps he loves, I thought, re-  
members, grieves.

At length there came the step upon  
the stair,

Upon the lock the old familiar  
hand :

Then first my spirit seemed to scent  
the air

Of Paradise ; then first the tardy  
sand

Of time ran golden ; and I felt my  
hair

Put on a glory, and my soul  
expand.

*10 June 1853.*

### THREE SEASONS

'A CUP for hope !' she said,  
In springtime ere the bloom was old ;  
The crimson wine was poor and cold  
By her mouth's richer red.

'A cup for love !' how low,  
How soft the words ; and all the while  
Her blush was rippling with a smile  
Like summer after snow.

'A cup for memory !'  
Cold cup that one must drain alone :  
While autumn winds are up and moan  
Across the barren sea.

Hope, memory, love :  
Hope for fair morn, and love for day,  
And memory for the evening grey  
And solitary dove.

18 June 1853.

### HOLY INNOCENTS

SLEEP, little Baby, sleep ;  
The holy Angels love thee,  
And guard thy bed, and keep  
A blessed watch above thee.  
No spirit can come near  
Nor evil beast to harm thee :  
Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear  
Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,  
The eternal Arms surround thee :  
The Shepherd of the sheep  
In perfect love hath found thee.  
Sleep through the holy night,  
Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,  
Until thou wake to light  
And love and warmth to-morrow.  
1 July 1853.

### SEASONS

IN Springtime when the leaves are  
young,  
Clear dewdrops gleam like jewels,  
hung  
On boughs the fair birds roost  
among.

When Summer comes with sweet  
unrest,  
Birds weary of their mother's breast,  
And look abroad and leave the nest.

In Autumn ere the waters freeze,  
The swallows fly across the seas :—  
If we could fly away with these !

In Winter when the birds are gone,  
The sun himself looks starved and  
wan,  
And starved the snow he shines upon.

September 1853.

### BURIED

THOU sleepest where the lilies fade,  
Thou dwellest where the lilies fade  
not :  
Sweet, when thine earthly part de-  
cayed  
Thy heavenly part decayed not.

Thou dwellest where the roses blow,  
The crimson roses bud and  
blossom :  
While on thine eyes is heaped the  
snow—  
The snow upon thy bosom.  
1853.

### A WISH

I WISH I were a little bird  
That out of sight doth soar ;  
I wish I were a song once heard  
But often pondered o'er,  
Or shadow of a lily stirred  
By wind upon the floor,  
Or echo of a loving word  
Worth all that went before,  
Or memory of a hope deferred  
That springs again no more.  
1853.

### TWO PARTED

'SING of a love lost and forgotten,  
Sing of a joy finished and o'er,

Sing of a heart core-cold and rotten,  
Sing of a hope springing no more.'  
'Sigh for a heart aching and sore.'

'I was most true and my own love  
betrayed me,

I was most true and she would  
none of me.

Was it the cry of the world that  
dismayed thee?

Love, I had bearded the wide  
world for thee.'

'Hark to the sorrowful sound of  
the sea.'

'Still in my dreams she comes tender  
and gracious,

Still in my dreams love looks out  
of her eyes :

Oh that the love of a dream were  
veracious,

Or that thus dreaming I might  
not arise !'

'Oh for the silence that stilleth  
all sighs !'

1853.

### AUTUMN

CARE flieth,  
Hope and Fear together :  
Love dieth  
In the Autumn weather.

For a friend  
Even Care is pleasant :  
When Fear doth end  
Hope is no more present :  
Autumn silences the turtle-dove :—  
In blank Autumn who could speak  
of love ?

1853.

### SEASONS

CROCUSES and snowdrops wither,  
Violets, primroses together,  
Fading with the fading Spring  
Before a fuller blossoming.

O sweet Summer, pass not soon,  
Stay awhile the harvest-moon :  
O sweetest Summer, do not go,  
For Autumn's next and next the  
snow.

When Autumn comes the days are  
drear,

It is the downfall of the year :  
We heed the wind and falling leaf  
More than the golden harvest-sheaf.

Dreary Winter come at last :  
Come quickly, so be quickly past :  
Dusk and sluggish Winter, wane  
Till Spring and sunlight dawn again.

7 December 1853.

### BALLAD

'SOFT white lamb in the daisy  
meadow,  
Come hither and play with me,  
For I am lonesome and I am tired  
Underneath the apple tree.'

'There's your husband if you are  
lonesome, lady,  
And your bed if you want for rest :  
And your baby for a playfellow  
With a soft hand for your breast.'

'Fair white dove in the sunshine,  
Perched on the ashen bough,  
Come and perch by me and coo to  
me  
While the buds are blowing now.'

'I must keep my nestlings warm,  
lady,  
Underneath my downy breast :  
There's your baby to coo and crow  
to you  
While I brood upon my nest.'

'Faint white rose, come lie on my  
heart,  
Come lie there with your thorn :  
For I'll be dead at the vesper-bell  
And buried the morrow morn.'

'There's blood on your lily breast,  
lady,  
Like roses when they blow,  
And there's blood upon your little  
hand  
That should be white as snow :  
I will stay amid my fellows  
Where the lilies grow.'

'But it's oh my own own little babe  
That I had you here to kiss,  
And to comfort me in the strange  
next world  
Though I slighted you so in this.'

'You shall kiss both cheek and chin,  
mother,  
And kiss me between the eyes,  
Or ever the moon is on her way  
And the pleasant stars arise :  
You shall kiss and kiss your fill,  
mother,  
In the nest of Paradise.'

7 January 1854.

### A SOUL

SHE stands as pale as Parian statues  
stand ;  
Like Cleopatra when she turned  
at bay,

And felt her strength above the  
Roman sway,  
And felt the aspic writhing in her  
hand.  
Her face is steadfast toward the  
shadowy land,  
For dim beyond it looms the land  
of day :  
Her feet are steadfast, all the  
arduous way  
That foot-track doth not waver on  
the sand.  
She stands there like a beacon  
through the night,  
A pale clear beacon where the  
storm-drift is—  
She stands alone, a wonder deathly-  
white :  
She stands there patient nerved with  
inner might,  
Indomitable in her feebleness,  
Her face and will athirst against the  
light.

7 February 1854.

### THE BOURNE

UNDERNEATH the growing grass,  
Underneath the living flowers,  
Deeper than the sound of showers :  
There we shall not count the  
hours  
By the shadows as they pass.

Youth and health will be but vain,  
Beauty reckoned of no worth :  
There a very little girth  
Can hold round what once the  
earth  
Seemed too narrow to contain.

17 February 1854.

## DREAM-LOVE

YOUNG Love lies sleeping  
 In May-time of the year,  
 Among the lilies,  
 Lapped in the tender light :  
 White lambs come grazing,  
 White doves come building there ;  
 And round about him  
 The May-bushes are white.

Soft moss the pillow  
 For oh a softer cheek ;  
 Broad leaves cast shadow  
 Upon the heavy eyes :  
 There winds and waters  
 Grow lulled and scarcely speak ;  
 There twilight lingers  
 The longest in the skies.

Young Love lies dreaming ;  
 But who shall tell the dream ?  
 A perfect sunlight  
 On rustling forest tips ;  
 Or perfect moonlight  
 Upon a rippling stream ;  
 Or perfect silence,  
 Or song of cherished lips.

Burn odours round him  
 To fill the drowsy air ;  
 Weave silent dances  
 Around him to and fro ;  
 For oh in waking  
 The sights are not so fair,  
 And song and silence  
 Are not like these below.

Young Love lies dreaming  
 Till summer days are gone,—  
 Dreaming and drowsing  
 Away to perfect sleep :  
 He sees the beauty  
 Sun hath not looked upon,

And tastes the fountain  
 Unutterably deep.

Him perfect music  
 Doth hush unto his rest,  
 And through the pauses  
 The perfect silence calms :  
 Oh poor the voices  
 Of earth from east to west,  
 And poor earth's stillness  
 Between her stately palms !

Young Love lies drowsing  
 Away to popped death ;  
 Cool shadows deepen  
 Across the sleeping face :  
 So fails the summer  
 With warm delicious breath ;  
 And what hath autumn  
 To give us in its place ?

Draw close the curtains  
 Of branchèd evergreen ;  
 Change cannot touch them  
 With fading fingers sere :  
 Here the first violets  
 Perhaps will bud unseen,  
 And a dove, may be,  
 Return to nestle here.

19 May 1854.

## FROM THE ANTIQUE

It's a weary life, it is, she said :—  
 Doubly blank in a woman's lot :  
 I wish and I wish I were a man :  
 Or, better than any being, were  
 not :

Were nothing at all in all the world.  
 Not a body and not a soul :  
 Not so much as a grain of dust  
 Or drop of water from pole to pole.



Still the world would wag on the  
same,

Still the seasons go and come :  
Blossoms bloom as in days of old,  
Cherries ripen and wild bees hum.

None would miss me in all the  
world,

How much less would care or  
weep :

I should be nothing, while all the rest  
Would wake and weary and fall  
asleep.

28 June 1854.

### LONG LOOKED FOR

WHEN the eye hardly sees,  
And the pulse hardly stirs,  
And the heart would scarcely quicken  
Though the voice were hers :  
Then the longing wasting fever  
Will be almost past :  
Sleep indeed come back again,  
And peace at last.

Not till then, dear friends,  
Not till then, most like, most dear,  
The dove will fold its wings  
To settle here.  
Then to all her coldness  
I also shall be cold ;  
Then I also have forgotten  
Our happy love of old.

Close mine eyes with care,  
Cross my hands upon my breast,  
Let shadows and full silence  
Tell of rest :  
For she yet may look upon me,  
Too proud to speak, but know  
One heart less loves her in the world  
Than loved her long ago.

Strew flowers upon the bed  
And flowers upon the floor,  
Let all be sweet and comely  
When she stands at the door :  
Fair as a bridal chamber  
For her to come into,  
When the sunny day is over  
At falling of the dew.

If she comes, watch her not,  
But careless turn aside :  
She may weep if left alone  
With her beauty and her pride :  
She may pluck a leaf perhaps  
Or a languid violet  
When life and love are finished  
And even I forget.

12 August 1854.

### LISTENING

SHE listened like a cushat dove  
That listens to its mate alone :  
She listened like a cushat dove  
That loves but only one.

Not fair as men would reckon fair,  
Nor noble as they count the line :  
Only as graceful as a bough,  
And tendrils of the vine :  
Only as noble as sweet Eve  
Your ancestress and mine.

And downcast were her dovelike eyes  
And downcast was her tender cheek ;  
Her pulses fluttered like a dove  
To hear him speak.

October 1854.

### DEAD BEFORE DEATH

AH changed and cold, how changed  
and very cold,  
With stiffened smiling lips and  
cold calm eyes !

Changed, yet the same ; much  
 knowing, little wise,—  
*This* was the promise of the days of  
 old !

Grown hard and stubborn in the  
 ancient mould,  
 Grown rigid in the sham of life-  
 long lies :

We hoped for better things as  
 years would rise,

But it is over as a tale once told.

All fallen the blossom that no fruit-  
 age bore,

All lost the present and the future  
 time,

All lost, all lost, the lapse that went  
 before :

So lost till death shut-to the opened  
 door,

So lost from chime to everlasting  
 chime,

So cold and lost for ever evermore.

2 December 1854.

### ECHO

COME to me in the silence of the  
 night ;

Come in the speaking silence of  
 a dream ;

Come with soft rounded cheeks and  
 eyes as bright

As sunlight on a stream ;

Come back in tears,

O memory, hope, love of finished  
 years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too  
 bitter sweet,

Whose wakening should have  
 been in Paradise,

Where souls brimfull of love abide  
 and meet ;

Where thirsting longing eyes  
 Watch the slow door

That opening, letting in, lets out no  
 more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I  
 may live

My very life again though cold  
 in death :

Come back to me in dreams, that I  
 may give

Pulse for pulse, breath for breath :  
 Speak low, lean low,

As long ago, my love, how long ago.

18 December 1854.

### THE FIRST SPRING DAY

I WONDER if the sap is stirring yet,  
 If wintry birds are dreaming of a  
 mate,

If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the  
 sun

And crocus fires are kindling one  
 by one :

Sing, robin, sing ;

I still am sore in doubt concerning  
 Spring.

I wonder if the Springtide of this year  
 Will bring another Spring both lost  
 and dear ;

If heart and spirit will find out their  
 Spring,

Or if the world alone will bud and  
 sing :

Sing, hope, to me ;

Sweet notes, my hope, soft notes for  
 memory.

The sap will surely quicken soon or  
 late,

The tardiest bird will twitter to a  
 mate ;

So Spring must dawn again with  
warmth and bloom,  
Or in this world or in the world to  
come :

Sing, voice of Spring,  
Till I too blossom and rejoice and  
sing.

1 March 1855.

### MY DREAM

HEAR now a curious dream I dreamed  
last night,  
Each word whereof is weighed and  
sifted truth.

I stood beside Euphrates while it  
swelled

Like overflowing Jordan in its youth.  
It waxed and coloured sensibly to  
sight ;

Till out of myriad pregnant waves  
there welled

Young crocodiles, a gaunt blunt-  
featured crew,

Fresh-hatched perhaps and daubed  
with birthday dew.

The rest if I should tell, I fear my  
friend,

My closest friend, would deem the  
facts untrue ;

And therefore it were wisely left  
untold ;

Yet if you will, why, hear it to the  
end.

Each crocodile was girt with massive  
gold

And polished stones that with their  
wearers grew :

But one there was who waxed be-  
yond the rest,

Wore kinglier girdle and a kingly  
crown,

Whilst crowns and orbs and sceptres  
starred his breast.

All gleamed compact and green with  
scale on scale,

But special burnishment adorned his  
mail

And special terror weighed upon his  
frown ;

His punier brethren quaked before  
his tail,

Broad as a rafter, potent as a flail.  
So he grew lord and master of his  
kin :

But who shall tell the tale of all  
their woes ?

An execrable appetite arose,  
He battened on them, crunched, and  
sucked them in.

He knew no law, he feared no  
binding law,

But ground them with inexorable  
jaw.

The luscious fat distilled upon his  
chin,

Exuded from his nostrils and his  
eyes,

While still like hungry death he fed  
his maw ;

Till, every minor crocodile being  
dead

And buried too, himself gorged to  
the full,

He slept with breath oppressed and  
unstrung claw.

Oh marvel passing strange which  
next I saw !

In sleep he dwindled to the common  
size,

And all the empire faded from his  
coat.

Then from far off a wingèd vessel  
came,

Swift as a swallow, subtle as a flame :

I know not what it bore of freight  
 or host,  
 But white it was as an avenging  
 ghost.  
 It levelled strong Euphrates in its  
 course ;  
 Supreme yet weightless as an idle  
 mote  
 It seemed to tame the waters without  
 force  
 Till not a murmur swelled or billow  
 beat.  
 Lo, as the purple shadow swept the  
 sands,  
 The prudent crocodile rose on his  
 feet,  
 And shed appropriate tears and  
 wrung his hands.

What can it mean? you ask. I  
 answer not  
 For meaning, but myself must echo,  
 What ?  
 And tell it as I saw it on the spot.  
 9 March 1855.

### THE LAST LOOK

HER face was like an opening rose,  
 So bright to look upon :  
 But now it is like fallen snows,  
 As cold, as dead, as wan.

Heaven lit with stars is more like  
 her  
 Than is this empty crust :  
 Deaf, dumb, and blind, it cannot stir,  
 But crumbles back to dust.

No flower be taken from her bed  
 For me, no lock be shorn :  
 I give her up, the early dead,  
 The dead, the newly born.

If I remember her, no need  
 Of formal tokens set ;  
 Of hollow token-lies indeed  
 No need, if I forget.

23 March 1855.

### I HAVE A MESSAGE UNTO THEE

(WRITTEN IN SICKNESS)

GREEN sprout the grasses,  
 Red blooms the mossy rose,  
 Blue nods the harebell  
 Where purple heather blows :  
 The water-lily, silver white,  
 Is living fair as light :

Sweet jasmine-branches trail  
 A dusky starry veil :  
 Each goodly is to see,  
 Comely in its degree :  
 I, only I, alas that this should be,  
 Am ruinously pale.

New year renews the grasses,  
 The crimson rose renews,  
 Brings up the breezy bluebell,  
 Refreshes heath with dews :  
 Then water-lilies ever  
 Bud fresh upon the river :  
 Then jasmine lights its star  
 And spreads its arms afar :  
 I only in my spring  
 Can neither bud nor sing :  
 I find not honey but a sting  
 Though fair the blossoms are.

For me no downy grasses,  
 For me no blossoms pluck :  
 But leave them for the breezes,  
 For honey-bees to suck,  
 For childish hands to pull  
 And pile their baskets full.

I will not have a crown  
 That soon must be laid down :  
 Trust me : I cannot care  
 A withering crown to wear,  
 I who may be immortally made fair  
 Where autumn turns not brown.

Spring, summer, autumn,  
 Winter, all will pass,  
     With tender blossoms  
 And with fruitful grass.  
     Sweet days of yore  
 Will pass to come no more,  
     Sweet perfumes fly,  
 Buds languish and go by :  
 O bloom that cannot last,  
 O blossoms quite gone past,  
 I yet shall feast when you shall fast,  
     And live when you shall die.

Your work-day fully ended,  
 Your pleasant task being done,  
 You shall finish with the stars,  
 The moon and setting sun.  
 You and these and time  
 Shall end with the last chime,—  
 For earthly solace given,  
 But needed not in heaven ;  
 Needed not perhaps  
 Through the eternal lapse.  
 Or else, all signs fulfilled,  
 What you foreshow may yield  
 Delights through heaven's own  
     harvest field  
 With undecaying saps.

A blessing on the flowers  
 That God has made so good,  
 From crops of jealous gardens  
 To wildlings of a wood.  
 They show us symbols deep  
 Of how to sow and reap :  
 They teach us lessons plain  
 Of patient harvest-gain.

They still are telling of  
 God's unimagined love :—  
 'Oh gift,' they say, 'all gifts above,  
 Shall it be given in vain ?

'Better you had not seen us  
 But shared the blind man's night,  
 Better you had not scented  
 Our incense of delight,  
 Than only plucked to scorn  
 The rosebud for its thorn :  
 Not so the instinctive thrush  
 Hymns in a holly-bush.  
 Be wise betimes, and with the bee  
 Suck sweets from prickly tree,  
 To last when earth's are flown :  
 So God well pleased will own  
 Your work, and bless not time alone  
     But ripe eternity.'

26 March 1855.

## COBWEBS

IT is a land with neither night nor  
 day,  
 Nor heat nor cold, nor any wind  
 nor rain,  
 Nor hills nor valleys : but one  
 even plain  
 Stretches through long unbroken  
 miles away,  
 While through the sluggish air a  
 twilight grey  
 Broodeth : no moons or seasons  
 wax and wane,  
 No ebb and flow are there along  
 the main,  
 No bud-time, no leaf-falling, there  
 for aye :—  
 No ripple on the sea, no shifting  
 sand,  
 No beat of wings to stir the  
 stagnant space :

No pulse of life through all the  
 loveless land  
 And loveless sea ; no trace of days  
 before,  
 No guarded home, no toil-won  
 resting-place,  
 No future hope, no fear for ever-  
 more.  
*October 1855.*

## MAY

I CANNOT tell you how it was ;  
 But this I know : it came to  
 pass—  
 Upon a bright and breezy day  
 When May was young, ah pleasant  
 May !  
 As yet the poppies were not born  
 Between the blades of tender corn ;  
 The last eggs had not hatched as  
 yet,  
 Nor any bird forgone its mate.  
 I cannot tell you what it was ;  
 But this I know : it did but pass.  
 It passed away with sunny May,  
 With all sweet things it passed  
 away,  
 And left me old, and cold, and grey.  
*20 November 1855.*

## AN AFTER-THOUGHT

OH lost garden Paradise !—  
 Were the roses redder there  
 Than they blossom elsewhere ?  
 Was the night's delicious shade  
 More intensely star-inlaid ?  
 Who can tell what memories  
 Of lost beloved Paradise  
 Saddened Eve with sleepless eyes ?

Fair first mother lulled to rest  
 In a choicer garden-nest,  
 Curtained with a softer shading  
 Than thy tenderest child is laid in,—  
 Was the sundawn brighter far  
 Than our daily sundawns are ?  
 Was that love, first love of all,  
 Warmer, deeper, better worth,  
 Than has warmed poor hearts of  
 earth  
 Since the utter ruinous fall ?

Ah supremely happy once,  
 Ah supremely broken-hearted  
 When her tender feet departed  
 From the accustomed paths of  
 peace !  
 Catching Angel orisons  
 For the last last time of all,  
 Shedding tears that would not  
 cease  
 For the bitter fall.

Yet the accustomed hand for leading,  
 Yet the accustomed heart for  
 love :  
 Sure she kept one part of Eden  
 Angels could not strip her of.  
 Sure the fiery messenger  
 Kindling for his outraged Lord,  
 Willing with the perfect Will,  
 Yet rejoiced the flaming sword,  
 Chastening sore but sparing  
 still,  
 Shut her treasure out with her.

What became of Paradise ?  
 Did the cedars droop at all  
 (Springtide hastening to the fall)  
 Missing the beloved hand—  
 Or did their green perfection  
 stand  
 Unmoved beneath the perfect  
 skies ?—



Paradise was rapt on high,  
 It lies before the gate of  
 Heaven :—  
 Eve now slumbers there forgiven,  
 Slumbers Rachel comforted,  
 Slumber all the blessed dead  
 Of days and months and years  
 gone by,  
 A solemn swelling company.

They wait for us beneath the trees  
 Of Paradise, that lap of ease :  
 They wait for us, till God shall please.  
 Oh come the day of death, that day  
 Of rest which cannot pass away !  
 When the last work is wrought, the  
 last  
 Pang of pain is felt and past,  
 And the blessed door made fast.

18 December 1855.

### TO THE END

THERE are lilies for her sisters—  
 (Who so cold as they ?)—  
 And heartsease for one I must not  
 name  
 When I am far away.  
 I shall pluck the lady lilies  
 And fancy all the rest :  
 I shall pluck the bright-eyed hearts-  
 ease  
 For her sake I love the best :  
 As I wander on with weary feet  
 Toward the twilight shadowy west.

O bird that flyest eastward  
 Unto that sunny land,  
 Oh wilt thou light on lilies white  
 Beside her whiter hand ?  
 Soft summer wind that breathest  
 Of perfumes and sweet spice,

Ah tell her what I dare not tell  
 Of watchful waiting eyes,  
 Of love that yet may meet again  
 In distant Paradise.

I go from earth to heaven  
 A dim uncertain road,  
 A houseless pilgrim through the  
 world

Unto a sure abode :  
 While evermore an Angel  
 Goes with me day and night,  
 A ministering spirit  
 From the land of light,  
 My holy fellow-servant sent  
 To guide my steps aright.

I wonder if the Angels  
 Love with such love as ours,  
 If for each other's sake they pluck  
 And keep eternal flowers.  
 Alone I am and weary,  
 Alone yet not alone :  
 Her soul talks with me by the way  
 From tedious stone to stone,  
 A blessed Angel treads with me  
 The awful paths unknown.

When will the long road end in rest,  
 The sick bird perch and brood ?  
 When will my Guardian fold his  
 wings  
 At rest in the finished good ?  
 Lulling, lulling me off to sleep :  
 While Death's strong hand doth  
 roll  
 My sins behind his back,  
 And my life up like a scroll,  
 Till through sleep I hear kind Angels  
 Rejoicing at the goal.

If her spirit went before me  
 Up from night to day,  
 It would pass me like the lightning  
 That kindles on its way.



I should feel it like the lightning  
 Flashing fresh from heaven :  
 I should long for heaven sevenfold  
 more,  
 Yea and sevenfold seven :  
 Should pray as I have not prayed  
 before,  
 And strive as I have not striven.

She will learn new love in heaven,  
 Who is so full of love ;  
 She will learn new depths of tender-  
 ness  
 Who is tender like a dove.  
 Her heart will no more sorrow,  
 Her eyes will weep no more :  
 Yet it may be she will yearn  
 And look back from far before :  
 Lingering on the golden threshold  
 And leaning from the door.  
 18 December 1855.

## MAY

‘SWEET Life is dead.’—‘Not so :  
 I meet him day by day,  
 Where bluest fountains flow  
 And trees are white as snow,  
 For it is time of May.  
 Even now from long ago  
 He will not say me nay.  
 He is most fair to see :  
 And if I wander forth, I know  
 He wanders forth with me.’

‘But Life is dead to me :  
 The worn-out year was failing,  
 West winds took up a wailing  
 To watch his funeral :  
 Bare poplars shivered tall  
 And lank vines stretched to see.  
 ’Twixt him and me a wall  
 Was frozen of earth-like stone

With brambles overgrown :  
 Chill darkness wrapped him like a  
 pall,  
 And I am left alone.’

‘How can you call him dead ?  
 He buds out everywhere :  
 In every hedgerow rank,  
 On every moss-grown bank,  
 I find him here and there.  
 He crowns my willing head  
 With May-flowers white and red,  
 He rears my tender heartsease-  
 bed :  
 He makes my branch to bud and  
 bear,  
 And blossoms where I tread.

31 December 1855.

## SHUT OUT

THE door was shut. I looked be-  
 tween  
 Its iron bars ; and saw it lie,  
 My garden, mine, beneath the sky,  
 Pied with all flowers bedewed and  
 green.

From bough to bough the song-birds  
 crossed,  
 From flower to flower the moths  
 and bees :  
 With all its nests and stately trees  
 It had been mine, and it was lost.

A shadowless spirit kept the gate,  
 Blank and unchanging like the  
 grave.  
 I, peering through, said ; ‘Let me  
 have  
 Some buds to cheer my outcast  
 state.’

He answered not. 'Or give me,  
then,  
But one small twig from shrub or  
tree ;  
And bid my home remember me  
Until I come to it again.'

The spirit was silent ; but he took  
Mortar and stone to build a wall ;  
He left no loophole great or small  
Through which my straining eyes  
might look.

So now I sit here quite alone,  
Blinded with tears ; nor grieve  
for that,  
For nought is left worth looking at  
Since my delightful land is gone.

A violet bed is budding near,  
Wherein a lark has made her nest ;  
And good they are, but not the  
best ;

And dear they are, but not so dear.  
*20 January 1856.*

### BY THE WATER

THERE are rivers lapsing down  
Lily-laden to the sea :  
Every lily is a boat  
For bees, one, two, or three :  
I wish there were a fairy boat  
For you, my friend, and me.

And if there were a fairy boat  
And if the river bore us,  
We should not care for all the past  
Nor all that lies before us,  
Not for the hopes that buoyed us  
once,  
Not for the fears that tore us.

We would rock upon the river  
Scarcely floating by,

R

Rocking, rocking like the lilies,  
You, my friend, and I :  
Rocking like the stately lilies  
Beneath the statelier sky.

But ah where is that river  
Whose hyacinth banks descend  
Down to the sweeter lilies  
Till soft their shadows blend  
Into a watery twilight ?—  
And ah where is my friend ?

*7 February 1856.*

### A CHILLY NIGHT

I ROSE at the dead of night,  
And went to the lattice alone  
To look for my Mother's ghost  
Where the ghostly moonlight  
shone.

My friends had failed one by one,  
Middle-aged, young, and old,  
Till the ghosts were warmer to me  
Than my friends that had grown  
cold.

I looked and I saw the ghosts  
Dotting plain and mound :  
They stood in the blank moonlight,  
But no shadow lay on the ground :  
They spoke without a voice  
And they leaped without a sound.

I called : 'O my Mother dear,'—  
I sobbed : 'O my Mother kind,  
Make a lonely bed for me  
And shelter it from the wind.

'Tell the others not to come  
To see me night or day :  
But I need not tell my friends  
To be sure to keep away.'

Y

My Mother raised her eyes,  
They were blank and could not  
see :

Yet they held me with their stare  
While they seemed to look at me.

She opened her mouth and spoke ;  
I could not hear a word,  
While my flesh crept on my bones  
And every hair was stirred.

She knew that I could not hear  
The message that she told  
Whether I had long to wait  
Or soon should sleep in the mould :  
I saw her toss her shadowless hair  
And wring her hands in the cold.

I strained to catch her words,  
And she strained to make me hear ;  
But never a sound of words  
Fell on my straining ear.

From midnight to the cockcrow  
I kept my watch in pain  
While the subtle ghosts grew  
subtler  
In the sad night on the wane.

From midnight to the cockcrow  
I watched till all were gone,  
Some to sleep in the shifting sea  
And some under turf and stone :  
Living had failed and dead had failed,  
And I was indeed alone.

11 *February* 1856.

#### LET PATIENCE HAVE HER PERFECT WORK

I SAW a bird alone,  
In its nest it sat alone,  
For its mate was dead or flown  
Though it was early Spring.  
Hard by were buds half-blown,  
With cornfields freshly sown :

It could only perch and moan  
That used to sing :  
Droop in sorrow left alone :  
A sad sad thing.

I saw a star alone,  
In blue heaven it hung alone,  
A solitary throne  
In the waste of space :  
Where no moon-glories are,  
Where not a second star  
Beams through night from near or far  
To that lone place.  
Its beauties all unknown,  
Its glories all alone,  
Sad in heaven's face.

Doth the bird desire a mate,  
Pine for a second mate,  
Whose first joy was so great  
With its own dove ?

Doth the star supreme in night  
Desire a second light  
To make it seem less bright  
In the shrine of heavenly height  
That is above ?—

Ah better wait alone,  
In nest or heaven alone,  
Forsaken or unknown :  
Till, time being past and gone,  
Full eternity rolls on,  
While patience reaps what it has  
sown

In the harvest-land of love.

12 *March* 1856.

#### IN THE LANE

WHEN my love came home to me,  
Pleasant summer bringing,  
Every tree was out in leaf,  
Every bird was singing.

There I met her in the lane  
 By those waters gleamy,  
 Met her toward the fall of day,  
 Warm and dear and dreamy.  
 Did I loiter in the lane?  
 None was there to see me.

Only roses in the hedge,  
 Lilies on the river,  
 Saw our greeting fast and fond,  
 Counted gift and giver,  
 Saw me take her to my home,  
 Take her home for ever.

3 May 1856.

### ACME

SLEEP, unforgotten sorrow, sleep  
 awhile:

Make even awhile as though I  
 might forget;

Let the wound staunch thy tedious  
 fingers fret,

Till once again I look abroad and  
 smile,

Warmed in the sunlight: let no  
 tears defile

This hour's content, no conscious  
 thorns beset

My path: O sorrow, slumber,  
 slumber yet

A moment, rouse not yet the  
 smouldering pile.

So shalt thou wake again with  
 added strength,

O unforgotten sorrow, stir again  
 The slackening fire, refine the

lulling pain

To quickened torture and a  
 subtler edge.

The wrung cord snaps at last:  
 beneath the wedge

The toughest oak groans long but  
 rends at length.

9 May 1856.

### A BED OF FORGET-ME-NOTS

Is Love so prone to change and  
 rot

We are fain to rear Forget-me-not  
 By measure in a garden-plot?—

I love its growth at large and free  
 By untrod path and unlopped tree,  
 Or nodding by the unpruned hedge,  
 Or on the water's dangerous edge  
 Where flags and meadowsweet blow  
 rank

With rushes on the quaking bank.

Love is not taught in learning's  
 school,

Love is not parcelled out by rule:  
 Hath curb or call an answer got?—

So free must be Forget-me-not.

Give me the flame no dampness  
 dulls,

The passion of the instinctive pulse,  
 Love steadfast as a fixed star,

Tender as doves with nestlings are,  
 More large than time, more strong  
 than death:

This all creation travails of—  
 She groans not for a passing breath—

This is Forget-me-not and Love.

17 June 1856.

### LOOK ON THIS PICTURE AND ON THIS

I WISH we once were wedded,—  
 then I must be true:

You should hold my will in yours to  
 do or to undo:

But I hate myself now, Eva,  
 when I look at you.

You have seen her hazel eyes, her  
warm dark skin,  
Dark hair—but oh those hazel eyes  
a devil is dancing in :—  
You, my saint, lead up to heaven,  
she lures down to sin.

She's so redundant, stately :—in  
truth now have you seen  
Ever anywhere such beauty, such a  
stature, such a mien ?  
She may be queen of devils, but  
she's every inch a queen.

If you sing to me, I hear her subtler  
sweeter still  
Whispering in each tender cadence  
strangely sweet to fill  
All that lacks in music, all my soul  
and sense and will.

But you ask, 'Why struggle? I  
have given you up :  
Take again your pledges, snap the  
cord and break the cup :  
Feast you with your temptation,  
for I in heaven will sup.'

Can I bear to think upon you strong  
to break not bend,  
Pale with inner intense passion,  
silent to the end,  
Bear to leave you, bear to grieve  
you, O my dove, my friend ?

Listening so, I hide mine eyes and  
fancy years to come :  
You cherished in another home  
with no cares burdensome :  
You straitened in a winding-sheet,  
pulseless, at peace, and dumb.

Open house and heart, barred to  
me alone the door :  
Children bound to meet her,  
babies crow before :  
Blessed wife and blessed mother  
whom I may see no more.

Or I fancy—In the grave her  
comely body lies :  
She is 'tiring for the Bridegroom  
till the morning star shall rise,  
Then to shine a glory in the nuptials  
of the skies.

No more yearning tenderness, no  
more pale regret :  
She will not look for me when  
the marriage-guests are set,  
She joys with joy eternal as we  
had never met.

I would that one of us were dead,  
were gone no more to meet,  
Or she and I were dead together  
stretched here at your feet :  
That she and I were strained to-  
gether in one winding-sheet.

How have you the heart to face me  
with that passion in your stare  
Deathly silent? Weep before me  
rave at me in your despair :—  
If you keep patience, wings will  
spring and a halo from you  
hail.

See now how proud you are, like  
us after all, no saint :  
Not so upright but that you are  
bowed with the old bent :  
White at white-heat, tainted with  
the devil's special taint.

Did I love you? Never from the  
first cold day to this :  
You are not sufficient for my aim of  
life, my bliss :  
You are not sufficient, but I found  
the one that is.

Then did I never love you?—ah the  
sting struck home at last !  
You are drooping, fainting, dying  
—the worst of death is past—  
A light is on your face from the  
nearing heaven forecast.

Never?—yes I loved you then : I  
loved, the word still charms :  
For the first time, last time, lie  
here in my heart, my arms,  
For the first last time, as if I  
shielded you from harms.

For after all I loved you, loved you  
then, I love you yet :  
Listen, love, I love you : see, the  
seal of truth is set  
On my face, in tears—you cannot  
see? then feel them wet.

Pause at heaven's dear gate, look  
back, one moment back to  
grieve :

You go home through death to life :  
but I, I still must live :

On the threshold of heaven's love,  
O love, can you forgive?—

Fully freely fondly, with heart-truth  
above an oath,

With eager utter pardon given un-  
asked and nothing loth,

Heaping coals of fire upon our  
heads, forgiving both.

One word more—not one ! One  
look more—too late, too late !  
Lapped in love she sleeps who was  
lashed with scorn and hate :  
Nestling in the lap of Love the dove  
has found a mate.

Night has come, the night of rest :  
day will come, that day :

To her glad dawn of glory kindled  
from the deathless ray :

To us a searching fire and strict  
balances to weigh.

The tearless tender eyes are closed,  
the tender lips are dumb—

I shall not see or hear them more  
until that day shall come :

Then they must speak ; what will  
they say?—what then will be  
the sum?—

Shall we stand upon the left, and  
she upon the right—

We smirched with endless death and  
shame, she glorified in white—

Will she sound our accusation in  
intolerable light?

12 July 1856.

## GONE BEFORE

SHE was most like a rose when it  
flushes rarest,

She was most like a lily when it  
blows fairest,

She was most like a violet sweetest  
on the bank :

Now she's only like the snow, cold  
and blank,

After the sun sank.



She left us in the early days ; she  
 would not linger  
 For orange blossoms in her hair, or  
 ring on finger :  
 Did she deem windy grass more  
 good than these ?  
 Now the turf that's between us and  
 the hedging trees  
 Might as well be seas.

I had trained a branch she shelters  
 not under,  
 I had reared a flower she snapped  
 asunder :  
 In the bush and on the stately  
 bough  
 Birds sing ; she who watched them  
 track the plough  
 Cannot hear them now.

Every bird has a nest hidden  
 somewhere  
 For itself and its\*mate and joys  
 that come there,—  
 Though it soar to the clouds,  
 finding there its rest :  
 You sang in the height, but no more  
 with eager breast  
 Stoop to your own nest.

If I could win you back from  
 heaven-gate lofty,  
 Perhaps you would but grieve,  
 returning softly :  
 Surely they would miss you in the  
 blessed throng,  
 Miss your sweet voice in their  
 sweetest song,  
 Reckon time too long.

Earth is not good enough for you,  
 my sweet, my sweetest ;  
 Life on earth seemed long to you,  
 though to me fleetest ;

I would not wish you back if a wish  
 would do :

Only, love, I long for heaven  
 with you,  
 Heart-pierced through and  
 through.

12 July 1856.

## THE HOUR AND THE GHOST

### BRIDE

O LOVE, love, hold me fast,  
 He draws me away from thee ;  
 I cannot stem the blast,  
 Nor the cold strong sea :  
 Far away a light shines  
 Beyond the hills and pines ;  
 It is lit for me.

### BRIDEGROOM

I have thee close, my dear,  
 No terror can come near ;  
 Only far off the northern light shines  
 clear.

### GHOST

Come with me, fair and false,  
 To our home, come home.  
 It is my voice that calls :  
 Once thou wast not afraid  
 When I woo'd, and said,  
 'Come, our nest is newly made'—  
 Now cross the tossing foam.

### BRIDE

Hold me one moment longer !  
 He taunts me with the past,  
 His clutch is waxing stronger ;  
 Hold me fast, hold me fast.  
 He draws me from thy heart,  
 And I cannot withhold :  
 He bids my spirit depart



With him into the cold :—  
Oh bitter vows of old !

BRIDEGROOM

Lean on me, hide thine eyes :  
Only ourselves, earth and skies,  
Are present here : be wise.

GHOST

Lean on me, come away,  
I will guide and steady :  
Come, for I will not stay :  
Come, for house and bed are ready.  
Ah sure bed and house,  
For better and worse, for life and  
death,  
Goal won with shortened breath !  
Come, crown our vows.

BRIDE

One moment, one more word,  
While my heart beats still,  
While my breath is stirred  
By my fainting will.  
O friend, forsake me not,  
Forget not as I forgot :  
But keep thy heart for me,  
Keep thy faith true and bright ;  
Through the lone cold winter night  
Perhaps I may come to thee.

BRIDEGROOM

Nay peace, my darling, peace :  
Let these dreams and terrors cease :  
Who spoke of death or change or  
aught but ease ?

GHOST

O fair frail sin,  
O poor harvest gathered in !  
Thou shalt visit him again  
To watch his heart grow cold :

To know the gnawing pain  
I knew of old ;  
To see one much more fair  
Fill up the vacant chair,  
Fill his heart, his children bear ;  
While thou and I together,  
In the outcast weather,  
Toss and howl and spin.

11 September 1856.

LIGHT LOVE

‘OH sad thy lot before I came,  
But sadder when I go,—  
My presence but a flash of flame,  
A transitory glow  
Between two barren wastes like  
snow.  
What wilt thou do when I am gone ?  
Where wilt thou rest, my dear ?  
For cold thy bed to rest upon,  
And cold the falling year  
Whose withered leaves are lost and  
sere.’

She hushed the baby at her breast :  
She rocked it on her knee :  
‘And I will rest my lonely rest,  
Warmed with the thought of thee,  
Rest lulled to rest by memory.’  
She hushed the baby with her kiss,  
She hushed it with her breast :  
‘Is death so sadder much than  
this ?  
Sure death that builds a nest  
For those who elsewhere cannot  
rest.’

‘Oh sad thy note, my mateless dove,  
With tender nestling cold :  
But hast thou ne’er another love  
Left from the days of old  
To build thy nest of silk and gold ?

To warm thy paleness to a blush  
 When I am far away,—  
 To warm thy coldness to a flush  
 And turn thee back to May,  
 And turn thy twilight back to day.'

She did not answer him a word,  
 But leaned her face aside,  
 Sick with the pain of hope deferred  
 And sore with wounded pride :  
 He knew his very soul had lied.  
 She strained his baby in her arms,  
 His baby to her heart :  
 'Even let it go, the love that harms ;  
 We two will never part :  
 Mine own, his own, how dear thou  
 art !'

'Now never tease me, tender-eyed,  
 Sigh-voiced,' he said in scorn :  
 'For nigh at hand there blooms a  
 bride,  
 My bride before the morn :  
 Ripe-blooming she, as thou forlorn.  
 Ripe-blooming she, my rose, my  
 peach :  
 She woos me day and night :  
 I watch her tremble in my reach :  
 She reddens, my delight,  
 She ripens, reddens, in my sight.'

'And is she like a sunlit rose ?  
 Am I like withered leaves ?  
 Haste where thy spicèd garden  
 blows :  
 But in bare autumn eves  
 Wilt thou have store of harvest-  
 sheaves ?  
 Thou leavest love, true love behind,  
 To seek a love as true :  
 Go seek in haste,—but wilt thou  
 find ?

Change new again for new,  
 Pluck up, enjoy, yea trample too.

'Alas for her, poor faded rose,  
 Alas for her like me,  
 Cast down and trampled in the  
 snows.'—

'Like thee? nay not like thee :  
 She leans, but from a guarded tree.  
 Farewell, and dream as long ago  
 Before we ever met :  
 Farewell : my swift-paced horse-  
 seems slow.'—

She raised her eyes, not wet  
 But hard, to Heaven : 'Dost Thou  
 forget ?'

28 October 1856.

## DOWNCAST

THESE roses are as perfect as of  
 old,  
 Those lilies wear their selfsame  
 sunny white ;  
 I, only I, am changed and sad and  
 cold.  
 The morning star still glorifies  
 the night,  
 And musical that fountain in its  
 swell  
 Casts as of old its waters to the  
 light.  
 Oh that I were a rose, so I might  
 dwell  
 Contented in a garden on my  
 thorn,  
 Fulfilling mine appointed fragrance  
 well ;  
 Or stainless lily in the summer  
 morn—  
 Though no man pluck it, yet the  
 honey-bee  
 Knows it for sweetness in its  
 bosom born.  
 Or that I were a star, from sea to  
 sea

Guiding the seekers to their port  
 of rest,  
 Guiding them till night's shuffling  
 shadows flee ;  
 Or that I were a spring to which,  
 opprest  
 With desert drought, some wearied  
 wayfarer  
 Comes from the barren regions of  
 the West.  
 Then should I stand at peace, and  
 should not err,  
 Or lighten and make beautiful  
 the sky,  
 Or make more glad than frank-  
 incense and myrrh.  
 But now it is not so : I, only I,  
 Am changed and sad and cold,  
 while in my soul  
 The very fountain of delight is  
 dry.

12 December 1856.

### A TRIAD

THREE sang of love together : one  
 with lips  
 Crimson, with cheeks and bosom  
 in a glow,  
 Flushed to the yellow hair and  
 finger-tips ;  
 And one there sang who soft and  
 smooth as snow  
 Bloomed like a tinted hyacinth at  
 a show ;  
 And one was blue with famine after  
 love,  
 Who like a harpstring snapped  
 rang harsh and low  
 The burden of what those were sing-  
 ing of.  
 One shamed herself in love ; one  
 temperately

Grew gross in soulless love, a  
 sluggish wife ;  
 One famished died for love. Thus  
 two of three  
 Took death for love and won him  
 after strife ;  
 One droned in sweetness like a  
 fattened bee :  
 All on the threshold, yet all short  
 of life.

18 December 1856.

### LOVE FROM THE NORTH

I HAD a love in soft south land,  
 Beloved through April far in May ;  
 He waited on my lightest breath,  
 And never dared to say me nay.

He saddened if my cheer was sad,  
 But gay he grew if I was gay ;  
 We never differed on a hair,  
 My yes his yes, my nay his nay.

The wedding hour was come, the  
 aisles

Were flushed with sun and flowers  
 that day ;

I pacing balanced in my thoughts :  
 'It's quite too late to think of  
 nay.'—

My bridegroom answered in his  
 turn,

Myself had almost answered  
 'yea :'

When through the flashing nave I  
 heard

A struggle and resounding 'nay.'

Bridemaids and bridegroom shrank  
 in fear,

But I stood high who stood at  
 bay :

'And if I answer yea, fair Sir,  
What man art thou to bar with  
nay?'

He was a strong man from the north,  
Light-locked, with eyes of danger-  
ous grey :

'Put yea by for another time  
In which I will not say thee nay.'

He took me in his strong white arms,  
He bore me on his horse away  
O'er crag, morass, and hairbreadth  
pass,  
But never asked me yea or nay.

He made me fast with book and  
bell,  
With links of love he makes me  
stay ;

Till now I've neither heart nor power  
Nor will nor wish to say him nay.  
*19 December 1856.*

### IN AN ARTIST'S STUDIO

ONE face looks out from all his  
canvases,

One selfsame figure sits or walks  
or leans :

We found her hidden just behind  
those screens,

That mirror gave back all her love-  
liness.

A queen in opal or in ruby dress,  
A nameless girl in freshest  
summer-greens,

A saint, an angel—every canvas  
means

The same one meaning, neither  
more nor less.

He feeds upon her face by day and  
night,

And she with true kind eyes look  
back on him,  
Fair as the moon and joyful as the  
light :

Not wan with waiting, not with  
sorrow dim ;

Not as she is, but was when hope  
shone bright ;

Not as she is, but as she fills his  
dream.

*24 December 1856.*

### FATA MORGANA

A BLUE-EYED phantom far before  
Is laughing, leaping toward the  
sun :

Like lead I chase it evermore,  
I pant and run.

It breaks the sunlight bound or  
bound :

Goes singing as it leaps along  
To sheep-bells with a dreamy sound  
A dreamy song.

I laugh, it is so brisk and gay ;  
It is so far before, I weep :

I hope I shall lie down some day,  
Lie down and sleep.

*18 April 1857.*

### ONE DAY

I WILL tell you when they met :

In the limpid days of Spring ;  
Elder boughs were budding yet,  
Oaken boughs looked wintry still,  
But primrose and veined violet

In the mossful turf were set,  
While meeting birds made haste to  
sing

And build with right good will.

I will tell you when they parted ;  
 When plenteous Autumn sheaves  
     were brown  
 Then they parted heavy-hearted ;  
 The full rejoicing sun looked down  
 As grand as in the days before ;  
 Only they had lost a crown ;  
 Only to them those days of yore  
 Could come back nevermore.

When shall they meet? I cannot  
     tell,  
 Indeed, when they shall meet again,  
 Except some day in Paradise :  
 For this they wait, one waits in pain.  
 Beyond the sea of death Love lies  
 For ever, yesterday, to-day ;  
 Angels shall ask them, 'Is it well?'  
 And they shall answer 'Yea.'

6 June 1857.

### INTROSPECTIVE

I WISH it were over the terrible pain,  
 Pang after pang again and again :  
 First the shattering ruining blow,  
 Then the probing steady and slow.

Did I wince? I did not faint :  
 My soul broke but was not bent :  
 Up I stand like a blasted tree  
 By the shore of the shivering sea.

On my boughs neither leaf nor fruit,  
 No sap in my uttermost root,  
 Brooding in an anguish dumb  
 On the short past and the long to-  
     come.

Dumb I was when the ruin fell,  
 Dumb I remain and will never tell ;  
 O my soul, I talk with thee,  
 But not another the sight must see.

I did not start when the torture  
     stung,  
 I did not faint when the torture  
     wrung :  
 Let it come tenfold if come it must,  
 But I will not groan when I bite  
     the dust.

30 June 1857.

### A PEAL OF BELLS

STRIKE the bells wantonly,  
     Tinkle tinkle well ;  
 Bring me wine, bring me flowers,  
     Ring the silver bell.  
 All my lamps burn scented oil,  
     Hung on laden orange-trees,  
 Whose shadowed foliage is the foil  
     To golden lamps and oranges.  
 Heap my golden plates with fruit,  
     Golden fruit, fresh-plucked and  
     ripe ;  
 Strike the bells and breathe the  
     pipe ;  
 Shut out showers from summer  
     hours—  
 Silence that complaining lute—  
 Shut out thinking, shut out pain,  
 From hours that cannot come again.

Strike the bells solemnly,  
     Ding dong deep :  
 My friend is passing to his bed,  
     Fast asleep ;  
 There's plaited linen round his head,  
     While foremost go his feet—  
 His feet that cannot carry him.  
 My feast's a show, my lights are  
     dim ;  
 Be still, your music is not sweet,—  
 There is no music more for him.  
 His lights are out, his feast is  
     done :

His bowl that sparkled to the brim  
Is drained, is broken, cannot hold ;  
My blood is chill, his blood is cold ;  
His death is full, and mine begun.

7 July 1857.

### IN THE ROUND TOWER AT JHANSI

8 JUNE 1857

A HUNDRED, a thousand to one ;  
even so ;

Not a hope in the world remained :  
The swarming howling wretches  
below  
Gained and gained and gained.

Skene looked at his pale young  
wife.

‘Is the time come ?’—‘The time  
is come.’

Young, strong, and so full of life,  
The agony struck them dumb.

Close his arm about her now,  
Close her cheek to his,  
Close the pistol to her brow—  
God forgive them this !

‘Will it hurt much ?’—‘No, mine  
own :

I wish I could bear the pang for  
both.’—

‘I wish I could bear the pang alone :  
Courage, dear, I am not loth.’

Kiss and kiss : ‘It is not pain  
Thus to kiss and die.

One kiss more.’—‘And yet one  
again.’—

‘Good-bye.’—‘Good-bye.’

September 1857.

### DAY-DREAMS

GAZING through her chamber window  
Sits my soul’s dear soul :  
Looking northward, looking south  
ward,

Looking to the goal,  
Looking back without control.

I have strewn thy path, beloved,  
With plumed meadowsweet,  
Iris and pale perfumed lilies,  
Roses most complete :  
Wherefore pause on listless feet ?

But she sits and never answers,  
Gazing, gazing still  
On swift fountain, shadowed valley,  
Cedared sunlit hill :  
Who can guess or read her will ?

Who can guess or read the spirit  
Shrined within her eyes,  
Part a longing, part a languor,  
Part a mere surprise,  
While slow mists do rise and rise ?

Is it love she looks and longs for,  
Is it rest or peace,  
Is it slumber self-forgetful  
In its utter ease,  
Is it one or all of these ?

So she sits and doth not answer  
With her dreaming eyes,  
With her languid look delicious,  
Almost paradise,  
Less than happy, over-wise.

Answer me, O self-forgetful—  
Or of what beside ?  
Is it day-dream of a maiden,  
Vision of a bride,  
Is it knowledge, love, or pride ?

Cold she sits through all my kindling,  
Deaf to all I pray :  
I have wasted might and wisdom,  
Wasted night and day :  
Deaf she dreams to all I say.

Now if I could guess her secret,  
Were it worth the guess ?—  
Time is lessening, hope is lessening,  
Love grows less and less :  
What care I for no or yes ?

I will give her stately burial,  
Though, when she lies dead :  
For dear memory of the past time,  
Of her royal head,  
Of the much I strove and said.

I will give her stately burial,  
Stately willow-branches bent :  
Have her carved in alabaster,  
As she dreamed and leant  
While I wondered what she meant.

8 September 1857.

## A NIGHTMARE

### FRAGMENT

I HAVE a friend in ghostland—  
Early found, ah me how early lost !—  
Blood-red seaweeds drip along that  
coastland  
By the strong sea wrenched  
and tost.

If I wake he hunts me like a  
nightmare :  
I feel my hair stand up, my body  
creep :  
Without light I see a blasting sight  
there,  
See a secret I must keep.

12 September 1857.

## ANOTHER SPRING

IF I might see another Spring,  
I'd not plant summer flowers and  
wait :

I'd have my crocuses at once,  
My leafless pink mezereons,  
My chill-veined snowdrops, choicer  
yet

My white or azure violet,  
Leaf-nested primrose ; anything  
To blow at once, not late.

If I might see another Spring,  
I'd listen to the daylight birds  
That build their nests and pair and  
sing,

Nor wait for mateless nightingale ;  
I'd listen to the lusty herds,  
The ewes with lambs as white as  
snow,

I'd find out music in the hail  
And all the winds that blow.

If I might see another Spring—  
Oh stinging comment on my past  
That all my past results in 'if'—

If I might see another Spring  
I'd laugh to-day, to-day is brief ;  
I would not wait for anything :  
I'd use to-day that cannot last,  
Be glad to-day and sing.

15 September 1857.

## FOR ONE SAKE

ONE passed me like a flash of  
lightning by,  
To ring clear bells of heaven  
beyond the stars.  
Then said I : Wars and rumours  
of your wars



Are dull with din of what and where  
and why :

My heart is where these troubles  
draw not nigh :

Let me alone till heaven shall  
burst its bars,

Break up its fountains, roll its  
flashing cars

Earthwards with fire to test and  
purify.

Let me alone to-night, and one night  
more

Of which I shall not count the  
eventide :

Its morrow will not be as days  
before.

Let me alone to dream, perhaps to  
weep :

To dream of her the imperishable  
bride,

Dream while I wake and dream on  
while I sleep.

25 October 1857.

## MEMORY

### I

I NURSED it in my bosom while it  
lived,

I hid it in my heart when it was  
dead.

In joy I sat alone; even so I grieved  
Alone, and nothing said.

I shut the door to face the naked  
truth,

I stood alone—I faced the truth  
alone,

Stripped bare of self-regard or forms  
or ruth

Till first and last were shown.

I took the perfect balances ar  
weighed ;

No shaking of my hand disturbe  
the poise ;

Weighed, found it wanting: not  
word I said,

But silent made my choice.

None know the choice I made ;  
make it still.

None know the choice I mad  
and broke my heart,

Breaking mine idol : I have brace  
my will

Once, chosen for once my par

I broke it at a blow, I laid it cold,  
Crushed in my deep heart when

it used to live.

My heart dies inch by inch ; th  
time grows old,

Grows old in which I grieve.

8 November 1857.

### II

I have a room whereinto no on  
enters

Save I myself alone :

There sits a blessed memory o  
a throne,

There my life centres ;

While winter comes and goes—o  
tedious comer !—

And while its nip-wind blows ;

While bloom the bloodless lil  
and warm rose

Of lavish summer.

If any should force entrance h  
might see there

One buried yet not dead,

Before whose face I no more bow  
my head

Or bend my knee there ;

But often in my worn life's autumn  
weather

I watch there with clear eyes,  
And think how it will be in  
Paradise

When we're together.

17 February 1865.

### A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird  
Whose nest is in a watered shoot :  
My heart is like an apple-tree  
Whose boughs are bent with  
thickset fruit ;

My heart is like a rainbow shell  
That paddles in a halcyon sea ;  
My heart is gladder than all these  
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down ;  
Hang it with vair and purple dyes ;  
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,  
And peacocks with a hundred  
eyes ;

Work it in gold and silver grapes,  
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys ;  
Because the birthday of my life  
Is come, my love is come to me.

18 November 1857.

### AN APPLE GATHERING

I PLUCKED pink blossoms from  
mine apple-tree

And wore them all that evening  
in my hair :

Then in due season when I went to  
see

I found no apples there.

With dangling basket all along the  
grass

As I had come I went the self-  
same track :

My neighbours mocked me while  
they saw me pass

So empty-handed back.

Lilian and Lilius smiled in trudging  
by,

Their heaped-up basket teased  
me like a jeer ;

Sweet-voiced they sang beneath the  
sunset sky,

Their mother's home was near.

Plump Gertrude passed me with her  
basket full,

A stronger hand than hers helped  
it along ;

A voice talked with her through the  
shadows cool

More sweet to me than song.

Ah Willie, Willie, was my love less  
worth

Than apples with their green  
leaves piled above ?

I counted rosiest apples on the earth  
Of far less worth than love.

So once it was with me you stooped  
to talk

Laughing and listening in this  
very lane ;

To think that by this way we used  
to walk

We shall not walk again !

I let my neighbours pass me, ones  
and twos

And groups ; the latest said the  
night grew chill,

And hastened : but I loitered ; while  
the dews  
Fell fast I loitered still.

23 November 1857.

### WINTER : MY SECRET

I TELL my secret ? No indeed, not I :  
Perhaps some day, who knows ?  
But not to-day ; it froze, and blows,  
and snows,  
And you're too curious : fie !  
You want to hear it ? well :  
Only, my secret's mine, and I won't  
tell.

Or, after all, perhaps there's none :  
Suppose there is no secret after all,  
But only just my fun.

To-day's a nipping day, a biting day ;  
In which one wants a shawl,  
A veil, a cloak, and other wraps :  
I cannot ope to every one who taps,  
And let the draughts come whistling  
through my hall ;

Come bounding and surrounding me,  
Come buffeting, astounding me,  
Nipping and clipping through my  
wraps and all.

I wear my mask for warmth : who  
ever shows

His nose to Russian snows  
To be pecked at by every wind that  
blows ?

You would not peck ? I thank you  
for good will,

Believe, but leave that truth un-  
tested still.

Spring's an expansive time : yet I  
don't trust

March with its peck of dust,  
Nor April with its rainbow-crowned  
brief showers,

Nor even May, whose flowers  
One frost may wither through the  
sunless hours.

Perhaps some languid summer day,  
When drowsy birds sing less and  
less,

And golden fruit is ripening to  
excess,

If there's not too much sun nor too  
much cloud,

And the warm wind is neither still  
nor loud,

Perhaps my secret I may say,  
Or you may guess.

23 November 1857.

### MY FRIEND

Two days ago with dancing glancing  
hair,  
With living lips and eyes ;  
Now pale, dumb, blind, she lies ;  
So pale, yet still so fair.

We have not left her yet, not yet  
alone ;

But soon must leave her where  
She will not miss our care,  
Bone of our bone.

Weep not ; O friends, we should  
not weep :

Our friend of friends lies full of  
rest ;

No sorrow rankles in her breast,  
Fallen fast asleep.

She sleeps below,  
She wakes and laughs above.

To-day, as she walked, let us  
walk in love :

To-morrow follow so.

8 December 1857.

## MAUDE CLARE

OUT of the church she followed them  
 With a lofty step and mien :  
 His bride was like a village maid,  
 Maude Clare was like a queen.

'Son Thomas,' his lady mother said,  
 With smiles, almost with tears :  
 'May Nell and you but live as true  
 As we have done for years ;

'Your father thirty years ago  
 Had just your tale to tell ;  
 But he was not so pale as you,  
 Nor I so pale as Nell.'

My lord was pale with inward strife,  
 And Nell was pale with pride ;  
 My lord gazed long on pale Maude  
 Clare  
 Or ever he kissed the bride.

Lo, I have brought my gift, my lord,  
 Have brought my gift,' she said :  
 To bless the hearth, to bless the  
 board,  
 To bless the marriage-bed.

Here's my half of the golden chain  
 You wore about your neck,  
 That day we waded ankle-deep  
 For lilies in the beck.

Here's my half of the faded leaves  
 We plucked from budding bough,  
 With feet amongst the lily leaves,—  
 The lilies are budding now.'

He strove to match her scorn with  
 scorn,  
 He faltered in his place :  
 Lady,' he said,— 'Maude Clare,' he  
 said,—  
 'Maude Clare':—and hid his face.

R

She turned to Nell : 'My Lady Nell,  
 I have a gift for you ;  
 Though, were it fruit, the bloom  
 were gone,  
 Or, were it flowers, the dew.

'Take my share of a fickle heart,  
 Mine of a paltry love :  
 Take it or leave it as you will,  
 I wash my hands thereof.'

'And what you leave,' said Nell,  
 'I'll take,  
 And what you spurn I'll wear ;  
 For he's my lord for better and worse,  
 And him I love, Maude Clare.

'Yea though you're taller by the  
 head,  
 More wise, and much more fair,  
 I'll love him till he loves me best—  
 Me best of all, Maude Clare.'

*Towards February 1858.*

## AUTUMN

I DWELL alone—I dwell alone,  
 alone,  
 Whilst full my river flows down  
 to the sea,  
 Gilded with flashing boats  
 That bring no friend to me :  
 O love-songs, gurgling from a  
 hundred throats,  
 O love-pangs, let me be.

Fair fall the freighted boats which  
 gold and stone  
 And spices bear to sea :  
 Slim gleaming maidens swell their  
 mellow notes,  
 Love-promising, entreating—  
 Ah sweet but fleeting—

Z

Beneath the shivering, snow-white  
sails.

Hush! the wind flags and fails—  
Hush! they will lie becalmed in  
sight of strand—

Sight of my strand, where I do  
dwell alone;  
Their songs wake singing echoes in  
my land—  
They cannot hear me moan.

One latest, solitary swallow flies  
Across the sea, rough autumn-  
tempest-tost:

Poor bird, shall it be lost?  
Dropped down into this uncon-  
genial sea,

With no kind eyes  
To watch it while it dies,  
Ungessed, uncared for, free:  
Set free at last,

The short pang past,  
In sleep, in death, in dreamless sleep  
locked fast.

Mine avenue is all a growth of oaks,  
Some rent by thunder strokes,  
Some rustling leaves and acorns in  
the breeze;

Fair fall my fertile trees,  
That rear their goodly heads, and  
live at ease.

A spider's web blocks all mine  
avenue;

He catches down and foolish  
painted flies,

That spider wary and wise.  
Each morn it hangs a rainbow strung  
with dew

Betwixt boughs green with sap,  
So fair, few creatures guess it is  
a trap:

I will not mar the web,  
Though sad I am to see the small  
lives ebb.

It shakes—my trees shake—for a  
wind is roused

In cavern where it housed:  
Each white and quivering sail  
Of boats among the water-  
leaves

Hollows and strains in the full-  
throated gale:

Each maiden sings again—  
Each languid maiden, whom the  
calm

Had lulled to sleep with rest and  
spice and balm.

Miles down my river to the sea  
They float and wane,  
Long miles away from me.

Perhaps they say: 'She  
grieves,  
Uplifted like a beacon on her  
tower.'

Perhaps they say: 'One  
hour  
More, and we dance among the  
golden sheaves.'

Perhaps they say: 'One hour  
More, and we stand,  
Face to face, hand in  
hand;  
Make haste, O slack gale, to the  
looked-for land!'

My trees are not in flower,  
I have no bower,  
And gusty creaks my tower,  
And lonesome, very lonesome, is my  
strand.

UP-HILL

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labour you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.

29 June 1858.

AT HOME

WHEN I was dead, my spirit turned To seek the much-frequented house.

passed the door, and saw my friends Feasting beneath green orange-boughs;

From hand to hand they pushed the wine,

They sucked the pulp of plum and peach;

They sang, they jested, and they laughed,

For each was loved of each.

I listened to their honest chat.

Said one: 'To-morrow we shall be Plod plod along the featureless sands, And coasting miles and miles of sea.'

Said one: 'Before the turn of tide

We will achieve the eyrie-seat.'

Said one: 'To-morrow shall be like To-day, but much more sweet.'

'To-morrow,' said they, strong with hope,

And dwelt upon the pleasant way:

'To-morrow,' cried they one and all,

While no one spoke of yesterday.

Their life stood full at blessed noon;

I, only I, had passed away:

'To-morrow and to-day,' they cried;

I was of yesterday.

I shivered comfortless, but cast

No chill across the tablecloth;

I all-forgotten shivered, sad

To stay and yet to part how loth:

I passed from the familiar room,

I who from love had passed away,

Like the remembrance of a guest

That tarrieth but a day.

29 June 1858.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

I

ALL the world is out in leaf,

Half the world in flower,

Earth has waited weeks and weeks

For this special hour :  
Faint the rainbow comes and goes  
On a sunny shower.

All the world is making love :  
Bird to bird in bushes,  
Beast to beast in glades, and frog  
To frog among the rushes :  
Wake, O south wind sweet with  
spice,  
Wake the rose to blushes.

Life breaks forth to right and left—  
Pipe wild-wood notes cheery.  
Nevertheless there are the dead  
Fast asleep and weary—  
To-day we live, to-day we love,  
Wake and listen, deary.

## 2

I wish I were dead, my foe,  
My friend, I wish I were dead,  
With a stone at my tired feet  
And a stone at my tired head.

In the pleasant April days  
Half the world will stir and sing,  
But half the world will slug and rot  
For all the sap of Spring.

29 June 1858.

## THE CONVENT THRESHOLD

THERE'S blood between us, love, my  
love,  
There's father's blood, there's  
brother's blood ;  
And blood's a bar I cannot pass.  
I choose the stairs that mount above,  
Stair after golden sky-ward stair,  
To city and to sea of glass.

My lily feet are soiled with mud,  
With scarlet mud which tells a tale  
Of hope that was, of guilt that was  
Of love that shall not yet avail ;  
Alas, my heart, if I could bare  
My heart, this selfsame stain is there  
I seek the sea of glass and fire  
To wash the spot, to burn the snare  
Lo, stairs are meant to lift us higher  
Mount with me, mount the kindle  
stair.

Your eyes look earthward, mine look  
up.

I see the far-off city grand,  
Beyond the hills a watered land,  
Beyond the gulf a gleaming strand  
Of mansions where the righteous  
sup ;

Who sleep at ease among their trees  
Or wake to sing a cadenced hymn  
With Cherubim and Seraphim.  
They bore the Cross, they drained  
the cup,

Racked, roasted, crushed, wrenched  
limb from limb,

They the offscouring of the world  
The heaven of starry heavens un-  
furled,

The sun before their face is dim.

You looking earthward, what see  
you ?

Milk-white, wine-flushed among the  
vines,

Up and down leaping, to and fro,  
Most glad, most full, made strong  
with wines,

Blooming as peaches pearled with  
dew,

Their golden windy hair afloat,  
Love-music warbling in their throats  
Young men and women come and  
go.



You linger, yet the time is short :  
 Flee for your life, gird up your  
 strength  
 To flee ; the shadows stretched at  
 length  
 Show that day wanes, that night  
 draws nigh ;  
 Flee to the mountain, tarry not.  
 Is this a time for smile and sigh,  
 For songs among the secret trees  
 Where sudden blue birds nest and  
 sport ?  
 The time is short and yet you stay :  
 To-day, while it is called to-day,  
 Sneel, wrestle, knock, do violence,  
 pray ;  
 To-day is short, to-morrow nigh :  
 Why will you die ? why will you  
 die ?

You sinned with me a pleasant sin :  
 Repent with me, for I repent.  
 Woe's me the lore I must unlearn !  
 Woe's me that easy way we went,  
 So rugged when I would return !  
 How long until my sleep begin,  
 How long shall stretch these nights  
 and days ?  
 Surely, clean Angels cry, she prays ;  
 She laves her soul with tedious  
 tears :  
 How long must stretch these years  
 and years ?

Turn from you my cheeks and  
 eyes,  
 My hair which you shall see no  
 more—  
 alas for joy that went before,  
 For joy that dies, for love that dies !  
 Only my lips still turn to you,  
 My livid lips that cry, Repent !  
 O weary life, O weary Lent,  
 O weary time whose stars are few !

How should I rest in Paradise,  
 Or sit on steps of heaven alone ?  
 If Saints and Angels spoke of love,  
 Should I not answer from my throne,  
 Have pity upon me, ye my friends,  
 For I have heard the sound thereof.  
 Should I not turn with yearning eyes,  
 Turn earthwards with a pitiful pang ?  
 Oh save me from a pang in heaven !  
 By all the gifts we took and gave,  
 Repent, repent, and be forgiven.  
 This life is long, but yet it ends ;  
 Repent and purge your soul and  
 save :  
 No gladder song the morning stars  
 Upon their birthday morning sang  
 Than Angels sing when one repents.

I tell you what I dreamed last  
 night.  
 A spirit with transfigured face  
 Fire-footed clomb an infinite space.  
 I heard his hundred pinions clang,  
 Heaven-bells rejoicing rang and rang,  
 Heaven-air was thrilled with subtle  
 scents,  
 Worlds spun upon their rushing cars :  
 He mounted shrieking 'Give me  
 light !'  
 Still light was poured on him, more  
 light ;  
 Angels, Archangels he outstripped,  
 Exultant in exceeding might,  
 And trod the skirts of Cherubim.  
 Still 'Give me light,' he shrieked ;  
 and dipped  
 His thirsty face, and drank a sea,  
 Athirst with thirst it could not slake.  
 I saw him, drunk with knowledge,  
 take  
 From aching brows the aureole  
 crown—  
 His locks writhe like a cloven  
 snake—

He left his throne to grovel down  
 And lick the dust of Seraphs' feet :  
 For what is knowledge duly weighed?  
 Knowledge is strong, but love is  
     sweet ;  
 Yea all the progress he had made  
 Was but to learn that all is small  
 Save love, for love is all in all.

I tell you what I dreamed last  
 night.

It was not dark, it was not light,  
 Cold dews had drenched my plenteous hair

Through clay ; you came to seek me  
 there,

And 'Do you dream of me?' you  
 said.

My heart was dust that used to leap  
 To you ; I answered half asleep :

'My pillow is damp, my sheets are  
 red,

There's a leaden tester to my bed :

Find you a warmer playfellow,

A warmer pillow for your head,

A kinder love to love than mine.'

You wrung your hands : while I, like  
 lead,

Crushed downwards through the  
 sodden earth :

You smote your hands but not in  
 mirth,

And reeled but were not drunk with  
 wine.

For all night long I dreamed of  
 you :

I woke and prayed against my will,  
 Then slept to dream of you again.

At length I rose and knelt and  
 prayed.

I cannot write the words I said,  
 My words were slow, my tears were  
     few ;

But through the dark my silence  
 spoke

Like thunder. When this morning  
 broke,

My face was pinched, my hair was  
 grey,

And frozen blood was on the sill  
 Where stifling in my struggle I lay

If now you saw me you would say  
 Where is the face I used to love?

And I would answer : Gone before  
 It tarried veiled in Paradise.

When once the morning star shall  
 rise,

When earth with shadow flees away

And we stand safe within the door

Then you shall lift the veil thereof

Look up, rise up : for far above

Our palms are grown, our places  
 set ;

There we shall meet as once we met

And love with old familiar love.

9 July 1858.

## YET A LITTLE WHILE

THESE days are long before I die

To sit alone upon a thorn

Is what the nightingale forlorn

Does night by night continually :

She swells her heart to ecstasy

Until it bursts and she can die.

These days are long that wane and  
 wax :

Waxeth and wanes the ghostly  
 moon,

Achill and pale in cordial June

What is it that she wandering lack

She seems as one that aches and  
 aches,

Most sick to wane, most sick to wax

Of all the sad sights in the world  
 The downfall of an Autumn leaf  
 Is grievous and suggesteth grief :  
 Who thought when Spring was fresh  
 unfurled  
 Of this ? when Spring-twigs gleamed  
 impearled  
 Who thought of frost that nips the  
 world ?

There are a hundred subtle stings  
 To prick us in our daily walk :  
 A young fruit cankered on its  
 stalk,  
 A strong bird snared for all his  
 wings,  
 A nest that sang but never sings :  
 Yea sight and sound and silence  
 stings.

There is a lack in solitude,  
 There is a load in throng of life :  
 One with another genders strife,  
 To be alone yet is not good :  
 I know but of one neighbourhood  
 At peace and full—death's solitude.

Sleep soundly, dears, who lulled at  
 last  
 Forget the bird and all her pains,  
 Forget the moon that waxes,  
 wanes,  
 The leaf, the sting, the frostful blast :  
 Forget the troublous years that,  
 past  
 In strife or ache, did end at last.

We have clear call of daily bells,  
 A dimness where the anthems are,  
 A chancel vault of sky and star,  
 A thunder if the organ swells :  
 Alas our daily life—what else ?—  
 Is not in tune with daily bells.

You have deep pause betwixt the  
 chimes  
 Of earth and heaven, a patient  
 pause  
 Yet glad with rest by certain laws :  
 You look and long : while oftentimes  
 Precursive flush of morning climbs,  
 And air vibrates with coming chimes.  
*6 August 1858.*

## FATHER AND LOVER

## FATHER

IF underneath the water  
 You comb your golden hair  
 With a golden comb, my daughter,  
 Oh would that I were there !  
 If underneath the wave  
 You fill a slimy grave,  
 Would that I, who could not save,  
 Might share.

## LOVER

If my love Hero queens it  
 In summer Fairyland,  
 What would I be  
 But the ring on her hand ?  
 Her cheek when she leans it  
 Would lean on me :—  
 Or sweet, bitter-sweet,  
 The flower that she wore  
 When we parted, to meet  
 On the hither shore  
 Any more ? never more.

*Circa 1858.*

## BY THE SEA

WHY does the sea moan evermore ?  
 Shut out from heaven it makes its  
 moan,  
 It frets against the boundary shore :

All earth's full rivers cannot fill  
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.

Sheer miracles of loveliness

Lie hid in its unlooked-on bed :  
Anemones, salt, passionless,  
Blow flower-like—just enough alive  
To blow and multiply and thrive.

Shells quaint with curve or spot or  
spike,

Encrusted live things argus-eyed,  
All fair alike yet all unlike,  
Are born without a pang, and die  
Without a pang, and so pass by.

11 November 1858.

### WINTER RAIN

EVERY valley drinks,  
Every dell and hollow ;  
Where the kind rain sinks and sinks,  
Green of Spring will follow.

Yet a lapse of weeks—

Buds will burst their edges,  
Strip their wool-coats, glue-coats,  
streaks,

In the woods and hedges ;

Weave a bower of love

For birds to meet each other,  
Weave a canopy above  
Nest and egg and mother.

But for fattening rain

We should have no flowers,  
Never a bud or leaf again  
But for soaking showers ;

Never a mated bird

In the rocking tree-tops,  
Never indeed a flock or herd  
To graze upon the lea-crops.

Lambs so woolly white,  
Sheep the sun-bright leas on,  
They could have no grass to bite  
But for rain in season.

We should find no moss

In the shadiest places,  
Find no waving meadow grass  
Pied with broad-eyed daisies :

But miles of barren sand,

With never a son or daughter ;  
Not a lily on the land,  
Or lily on the water.

31 January 1859.

L. E. L.

'Whose heart was breaking for a little love.'

DOWNSTAIRS I laugh, I sport and  
jest with all ;

But in my solitary room above  
I turn my face in silence to the  
wall ;

My heart is breaking for a little  
love.

Though winter frosts are done,  
And birds pair every one,  
And leaves peep out, for springtide  
is begun.

I feel no spring, while spring is  
well-high blown,

I find no nest, while nests are in  
the grove :

Woe's me for mine own heart that  
dwells alone,

My heart that breaketh for a  
little love.

While golden in the sun

Rivulets rise and run,

While lilies bud, for springtide is  
begun.

All love, are loved, save only I ;  
their hearts

Beat warm with love and joy,  
beat full thereof :

They cannot guess, who play the  
pleasant parts,

My heart is breaking for a little  
love.

While bee-hives wake and  
whirr,

And rabbit thins his fur,

In living spring that sets the world  
astir.

I deck myself with silks and jewelry,  
I plume myself like any mated  
dove :

They praise my rustling show, and  
never see

My heart is breaking for a little  
love.

While sprouts green lavender

With rosemary and myrrh,

For in quick spring the sap is all  
astir.

Perhaps some saints in glory guess  
the truth,

Perhaps some angels read it as  
they move,

And cry one to another full of ruth,  
' Her heart is breaking for a little  
love.'

Though other things have birth,

And leap and sing for mirth,

When springtime wakes and clothes  
and feeds the earth.

Yet saith a saint, 'Take patience  
for thy scathe' ;

Yet saith an angel : 'Wait, and  
thou shalt prove

True best is last, true life is born of  
death,

O thou, heart-broken for a little  
love.

Then love shall fill thy girth,

And love make fat thy dearth,

When new spring builds new heaven  
and clean new earth.'

15 February 1859.

## SPRING

FROST-LOCKED all the winter,  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of  
fruits,

What shall make their sap ascend  
That they may put forth shoots ?

Tips of tender green,

Leaf, or blade, or sheath ;

Telling of the hidden life

That breaks forth underneath,

Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,

Drips the soaking rain,

By fits looks down the waking sun :

Young grass springs on the plain ;

Young leaves clothe early hedgerow  
trees ;

Seeds, and roots, and stones of  
fruits,

Swoln with sap put forth their  
shoots ;

Curled-headed ferns sprout in the  
lane ;

Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,

When life's alive in everything,

Before new nestlings sing,

Before cleft swallows speed their  
journey back

Along the trackless track—

God guides their wing,

He spreads their table that they  
nothing lack,—

Before the daisy grows a common  
flower,  
Before the sun has power  
To scorch the world up in his noon-  
tide hour.

There is no time like Spring,  
Like Spring that passes by ;  
There is no life like Spring-life born  
to die,—

Piercing the sod,  
Clothing the uncouth clod,  
Hatched in the nest,  
Fledged on the windy bough,  
Strong on the wing :  
There is no time like Spring that  
passes by,  
Now newly born, and now  
Hastening to die.

17 August 1859.

### WHAT GOOD SHALL MY LIFE DO ME ?

No hope in life : yet is there hope  
In death, the threshold of man's  
scope.

Man yearneth (as the heliotrope

For ever seeks the sun) through  
light,

Through dark, for Love : all, read  
aright,

Is Love, for Love is infinite.

Shall not this infinite Love suffice  
To feed thy dearth ? Lift heart and  
eyes

Up to the hills, grow glad and wise.

The hills are glad because the sun  
Kisses their round tops every one  
Where silver fountains laugh and  
run :

Smooth pebbles shine beneath : be-  
side,

The grass, mere green, grows myriad-  
eyed

With pomp of blossoms veined or  
pied.

So every nest is glad whereon  
The sun in tender strength has  
shone :

So every fruit he glows upon :

So every valley depth, whose herds  
At pasture praise him without words :  
So the winged ecstasies of birds.

If there be any such thing, what  
Is there by sunlight better not ?  
Nothing except dead things that  
rot.

Thou then who art not dead, and  
fit,

Like blasted tree beside the pit,  
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of Love, whereof  
The force wields earth and heaven  
above :

Who knows not Love begetteth  
Love ?

Love in the gracious rain distils :  
Love moves the subtle fountain-rills  
To fertilize uplifted hills,

And seedful valleys fertilize :  
Love stills the hungry lion's cries,  
And the young raven satisfies :

Love hangs this earth in space :  
Love rolls

Fair worlds rejoicing on their poles,  
And girds them round with aureoles :



Love lights the sun : Love through  
the dark  
Lights the moon's evanescent arc :  
Same Love lights up the glow-  
worm's spark :

Love rears the great : Love tends  
the small :  
Breaks off the yoke, breaks down  
the wall :  
Accepteth all, fulfilleth all.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet,  
Set waymarks for the doubtful feet  
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing hymns of Love, that those who  
- hear  
Far off in pain may lend an ear,  
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead lives of Love, that others who  
Behold your lives may kindle too  
With Love and cast their lots with  
you.

27 August 1859.

### COUSIN KATE

I WAS a cottage-maiden  
Hardened by sun and air,  
Contented with my cottage-mates,  
Not mindful I was fair.  
Why did a great lord find me out  
And praise my flaxen hair ?  
Why did a great lord find me out  
To fill my heart with care ?

He lured me to his palace-home—  
Woe's me for joy thereof—  
To lead a shameless shameful life,  
His plaything and his love.

He wore me like a golden knot,  
He changed me like a glove :  
So now I moan an unclean thing  
Who might have been a dove.

O Lady Kate, my Cousin Kate,  
You grew more fair than I :  
He saw you at your father's gate,  
Chose you and cast me by.  
He watched your steps along the lane,  
Your sport among the rye :  
He lifted you from mean estate  
To sit with him on high.

Because you were so good and pure  
He bound you with his ring :  
The neighbours call you good and  
pure,  
Call me an outcast thing.  
Even so I sit and howl in dust,  
You sit in gold and sing :  
Now which of us has tenderer heart ?  
You had the stronger wing.

O Cousin Kate, my love was true,  
Your love was writ in sand :  
If he had fooled not me but you,  
If you stood where I stand,  
He had not won me with his love  
Nor bought me with his land :  
I would have spit into his face  
And not have taken his hand.

Yet I've a gift you have not got  
And seem not like to get :  
For all your clothes and wedding-  
ring  
I've little doubt you fret.  
My fair-haired son, my shame, my  
pride,  
Cling closer, closer yet :  
Your sire would give broad lands for  
one  
To wear his coronet.  
18 November 1859.



## SISTER MAUDE

WHO told my mother of my shame,  
 Who told my father of my dear ?  
 Oh who but Maude, my sister Maude,  
 Who lurked to spy and peer.

Cold he lies, as cold as stone,  
 With his clotted curls about his  
 face :  
 The comeliest corpse in all the world  
 And worthy of a queen's embrace.

You might have spared his soul,  
 sister,  
 Have spared my soul, your own  
 soul too :  
 Though I had not been born at all,  
 He'd never have looked at you.

My father may sleep in Paradise,  
 My mother at Heaven-gate :  
 But sister Maude shall get no sleep  
 Either early or late.

My father may wear a golden gown,  
 My mother a crown may win ;  
 If my dear and I knocked at Heaven-  
 gate  
 Perhaps they'd let us in :  
 But sister Maude, O sister Maude,  
 Bide *you* with death and sin.  
*Circa 1860.*

## NOBLE SISTERS

'Now did you mark a falcon,  
 Sister dear, sister dear,  
 Flying toward my window  
 In the morning cool and clear ?  
 With jingling bells about her neck,  
 But what beneath her wing ?

It may have been a ribbon,  
 Or it may have been a ring.'—  
 'I marked a falcon swooping  
 At the break of day :  
 And for your love, my sister  
 dove,  
 I 'frayed the thief away.'—

'Or did you spy a ruddy hound,  
 Sister fair and tall,  
 Went snuffing round my garden  
 bound,  
 Or crouched by my bower wall ?  
 With a silken leash about his neck ;  
 But in his mouth may be  
 A chain of gold and silver links,  
 Or a letter writ to me.'—  
 'I heard a hound, highborn  
 sister,  
 Stood baying at the moon :  
 I rose and drove him from  
 your wall  
 Lest you should wake too  
 soon.'—

'Or did you meet a pretty page  
 Sat swinging on the gate ?  
 Sat whistling whistling like a bird,  
 Or may be slept too late :  
 With eaglets broidered on his cap,  
 And eaglets on his glove.  
 If you had turned his pockets out,  
 You had found some pledge of  
 love.'—  
 'I met him at this daybreak,  
 Scarce the east was red :  
 Lest the creaking gate should  
 anger you  
 I packed him home to  
 bed.'—

'Oh patience, sister ! Did you see  
 A young man tall and strong,  
 Swift-footed to uphold the right  
 And to uproot the wrong,

Come home across the desolate sea  
To woo me for his wife?  
And in his heart my heart is locked,  
And in his life my life.'—

'I met a nameless man, sister,  
Who loitered round our  
door:

I said: Her husband loves  
her much  
And yet she loves him  
more.'—

'Fie, sister, fie, a wicked lie,  
A lie, a wicked lie!  
I have none other love but him,  
Nor will have till I die.  
And you have turned him from our  
door,  
And stabbed him with a lie:  
I will go seek him thro' the world  
In sorrow till I die.'—

'Go seek in sorrow, sister,  
And find in sorrow too:  
If thus you shame our father's  
name

My curse go forth with  
you.'

*Towards January 1860.*

'NO, THANK YOU, JOHN'

I NEVER said I loved you, John;  
Why will you tease me day by  
day,  
And wax a weariness to think upon  
With always 'do' and 'pray'?

You know I never loved you, John;  
No fault of mine made me your  
toast:  
Why will you haunt me with a face  
as wan  
As shows an hour-old ghost?

I dare say Meg or Moll would take  
Pity upon you, if you'd ask:  
And pray don't remain single for  
my sake  
Who can't perform that task.

I have no heart?—Perhaps I have  
not;  
But then you're mad to take  
offence  
That I don't give you what I have  
not got:  
Use your own common sense.

Let bygones be bygones:  
Don't call me false, who owed  
not to be true:  
I'd rather answer 'No' to fifty  
Johns  
Than answer 'Yes' to you.

Let's mar our pleasant days no  
more,  
Song-birds of passage, days of  
youth:  
Catch at to-day, forget the days  
before;  
I'll wink at your untruth.

Let us strike hands as hearty  
friends;  
No more, no less; and friend-  
ship's good:  
Only don't keep in view ulterior  
ends,  
And points not understood

In open treaty. Rise above  
Quibbles and shuffling off and  
on.  
Here's friendship for you if you  
like; but love,—  
No, thank you, John.

*27 March 1860.*

## MIRAGE

THE hope I dreamed of was a  
 dream,  
 Was but a dream; and now I  
 wake,  
 Exceeding comfortless, and worn,  
 and old,  
 For a dream's sake.

I hang my harp upon a tree,  
 A weeping willow in a lake;  
 I hang my silenced harp there,  
 wrung and snapt  
 For a dream's sake.

Lie still, lie still, my breaking  
 heart;  
 My silent heart, lie still and  
 break:  
 Life, and the world, and mine own  
 self, are changed  
 For a dream's sake.

12 June 1860.

THE LAMBS OF GRASMERE,  
 1860

THE upland flocks grew starved and  
 thinned:  
 Their shepherds scarce could feed  
 the lambs

Whose milkless mothers butted them,  
 Or who were orphaned of their  
 dams.

The lambs athirst for mother's milk  
 Filled all the place with piteous  
 sounds:

Their mothers' bones made white  
 for miles

The pastureless wet pasture  
 grounds.

Day after day, night after night,  
 From lamb to lamb the shepherds  
 went,

With teapots for the bleating mouths,  
 Instead of nature's nourishment.

The little shivering gaping things  
 Soon knew the step that brought  
 them aid,  
 And fondled the protecting hand,  
 And rubbed it with a woolly head.

Then, as the days waxed on to weeks,  
 It was a pretty sight to see  
 These lambs with frisky heads and  
 tails

Skipping and leaping on the lea,  
 Bleating in tender trustful tones,  
 Resting on rocky crag or mound,  
 And following the beloved feet  
 That once had sought for them  
 and found.

These very shepherds of their flocks,  
 These loving lambs so meek to  
 please,

Are worthy of recording words  
 And honour in their due degrees:  
 So I might live a hundred years,  
 And roam from strand to foreign  
 strand,

Yet not forget this flooded spring  
 And scarce-saved lambs of West-  
 moreland.

24 July 1860.

## PROMISES LIKE PIE-CRUST

PROMISE me no promises,

So will I not promise you:

Keep we both our liberties,

Never false and never true:

Let us hold the die uncast,

Free to come as free to go:

For I cannot know your past,  
And of mine what can you know?

You, so warm, may once have been  
Warmer towards another one :  
I, so cold, may once have seen  
Sunlight, once have felt the sun :  
Who shall show us if it was  
Thus indeed in time of old ?  
Fades the image from the glass,  
And the fortune is not told.

If you promised, you might grieve  
For lost liberty again :  
If I promised, I believe  
I should fret to break the chain.  
Let us be the friends we were,  
Nothing more but nothing less :  
Many thrive on frugal fare  
Who would perish of excess.  
*20 April 1861.*

### WIFE TO HUSBAND

PARDON the faults in me,  
For the love of years ago :  
Good-bye.  
I must drift across the sea,  
I must sink into the snow,  
I must die.

You can bask in this sun,  
You can drink wine, and eat :  
Good-bye.  
I must gird myself and run,  
Though with unready feet :  
I must die.

Blank sea to sail upon,  
Cold bed to sleep in :  
Good-bye.  
While you clasp, I must be gone  
For all your weeping :  
I must die.

A kiss for one friend,  
And a word for two,—  
Good-bye :—  
A lock that you must send,  
A kindness you must do :  
I must die.

Not a word for you,  
Not a lock or kiss,  
Good-bye.  
We, one, must part in two ;  
Verily death is this :  
I must die.

*8 June 1861.*

### BETTER SO

FAST asleep, mine own familiar  
friend,  
Fast asleep at last :  
Though the pain was strong,  
Though the struggle long,  
It is past :  
All thy pangs are at an end.

Whilst I weep, whilst death-bells  
toll,  
Thou art fast asleep,  
With idle hands upon thy breast  
And heart at rest :  
Whilst I weep  
Angels sing around thy singing soul.

I would not speak the word if I could  
raise  
My dead to life :  
I would not speak  
If I could flush thy cheek  
And rouse thy pulses' strife  
And send thy feet on the once-trodden  
ways.

*13 December 1861.*

## OUR WIDOWED QUEEN

THE Husband of the widow care  
for her,

The Father of the fatherless :  
The faithful Friend, the abiding  
Comforter,  
Watch over her to bless.

Full twenty years of blameless  
married faith,  
Of love and honour questioned  
not,  
Joys, griefs imparted : for the first  
time Death  
Sunders the common lot.

Christ help the desolate Queen upon  
her throne,  
Strengthen her hands, confirm  
her heart :  
For she henceforth must bear a load  
alone  
Borne until now in part.

Christ help the desolate Woman in  
her home,  
Broken of heart, indeed bereft :  
Shrinking from solitary days to come,  
Beggared though much is left.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of  
the Dead,  
Weep with your Mother where  
she weeps :  
Yet not as sorrowing without hope  
be shed  
Your tears : he only sleeps.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of  
the realm,  
In pale reflected sorrow move :  
Revere the widowed hand that holds  
the helm,  
Love her with double love.

In royal patience of her soul possess  
May she fulfil her length of days :  
Then may her children rise and call  
her blest,

Then may her Husband praise  
16 December 1861.

## IN PROGRESS

TEN years ago it seemed impossible  
That she should ever grow so  
calm as this,  
With self-remembrance in her  
warmest kiss  
And dim dried eyes like an exhausted  
well.

Slow-speaking when she has some  
fact to tell,

Silent with long-unbroken silences  
Centred in self yet not unpleased  
to please,

Gravely monotonous like a passing  
bell.

Mindful of drudging daily common  
things,

Patient at pastime, patient at her  
work,

Wearied perhaps but strenuous  
certainly.

Sometimes I fancy we may one  
day see

Her head shoot forth seven stars  
from where they lurk

And her eyes lightnings and her  
shoulders wings.

31 March 1862.

## ON THE WING

ONCE in a dream (for once I dreamed  
of you)

We stood together in an open  
field ;

Above our heads two swift-winged  
 pigeons wheeled,  
 Sporting at ease and courting full  
 in view :—  
 When loftier still a broadening dark-  
 ness flew,  
 Down-swooping, and a ravenous  
 hawk revealed ;  
 Too weak to fight, too fond to fly,  
 they yield ;  
 So farewell life and love and  
 pleasures new.  
 Then as their plumes fell fluttering  
 to the ground,  
 Their snow-white plumage flecked  
 with crimson drops,  
 I wept, and thought I turned  
 towards you to weep :  
 But you were gone ; while rust-  
 ling hedgerow tops  
 Bent in a wind which bore to me a  
 sound  
 Of far-off piteous bleat of lambs  
 and sheep.

17 December 1862.

### SONG

Two doves upon the selfsame  
 branch,  
 Two lilies on a single stem,  
 Two butterflies upon one flower :—  
 Oh happy they who look on them !  
 Who look upon them hand in  
 hand  
 Flushed in the rosy summer light ;  
 Who look upon them hand in hand,  
 And never give a thought to  
 night.

Before 1863.

R

### THE QUEEN OF HEARTS

How comes it, Flora, that, when-  
 ever we  
 Play cards together, you invariably,  
 However the pack parts,  
 Still hold the Queen of Hearts ?

I've scanned you with a scrutinizing  
 gaze,  
 Resolved to fathom these your secret  
 ways :  
 But, sift them as I will,  
 Your ways are secret still.

I cut and shuffle ; shuffle, cut, again ;  
 But all my cutting, shuffling, proves  
 in vain :  
 Vain hope, vain forethought too ;  
 That Queen still falls to you.

I dropped her once, prepense ; but,  
 ere the deal  
 Was dealt, your instinct seemed her  
 loss to feel :  
 'There should be one card  
 more,'  
 You said, and searched the  
 floor.

I cheated once ; I made a private  
 notch  
 In Heart-Queen's back, and kept a  
 lynx-eyed watch ;  
 Yet such another back  
 Deceived me in the pack :

The Queen of Clubs assumed by  
 arts unknown  
 An imitative dint that seemed my  
 own ;  
 This notch, not of my doing,  
 Misled me to my ruin.

2 A

It baffles me to puzzle out the clue,  
Which must be skill, or craft, or  
    luck in you :  
    Unless, indeed, it be  
    Natural affinity.

3 January 1863.

## SEASONS

Oh the cheerful Budding-time !  
    When thorn-hedges turn to green,  
When new leaves of elm and lime  
    Cleave and shed their winter  
    screen ;  
Tender lambs are born and baa,  
    North wind finds no snow to bring,  
Vigorous Nature laughs 'Ha ha !'  
    In the miracle of Spring.

Oh the gorgeous Blossom-days !  
    When broad flag-flowers drink  
    and blow ;  
In and out in Summer-blaze  
    Dragon-flies flash to and fro ;  
Ashen branches hang out keys ;  
    Oaks put forth the rosy shoot,  
Wandering herds wax sleek at ease,  
    Lovely blossoms end in fruit.

Oh the shouting Harvest-weeks !  
    Mother Earth grown fat with  
    sheaves ;  
Thrifty gleaner finds who seeks ;  
    Russet-golden pomp of leaves  
Crowns the woods, to fall at length ;  
    Bracing winds are felt to stir,  
Ocean gathers up her strength,  
    Beasts renew their dwindled fur.

Oh the starving Winter lapse !  
    Ice-bound, hunger-pinched, and  
    dim ;  
Dormant roots recall their saps,

Empty nests show black and  
    grim.  
Short-lived sunshine gives no heat,  
    Undue buds are nipped by frost,  
Snow sets forth a winding-sheet,  
    And all hope of life seems lost.  
20 January 1863.

## JUNE

COME, cuckoo, come :  
    Come again, swift swallow :  
Come and welcome ! when you come  
    Summer's sure to follow :  
    June the month of months  
    Flowers and fruitage brings too,  
When green trees spread shadiest  
    boughs,  
    When each wild bird sings too.

May is scant and crude,  
    Generous June is riper :  
Birds fall silent in July,  
    June has its woodland piper :  
Rocks upon the maple-tops  
    Homely-hearted linnet,  
Full in hearing of his nest  
    And the dear ones in it.

If the year would stand  
    Still at June for ever,  
With no further growth on land  
    Nor further flow of river,  
If all nights were shortest nights  
And longest days were all the seven  
This might be a merrier world  
    To my mind to live in.  
5 February 1863.

## A RING POSY

JESS and Jill are pretty girls,  
    Plump and well to do,



In a cloud of windy curls :  
 Yet I know who  
 Loves me more than curls or pearls.

I'm not pretty, not a bit—  
 Thin and sallow-pale ;  
 When I trudge along the street  
 I don't need a veil :  
 Yet I have one fancy hit.

Jess and Jill can trill and sing  
 With a flute-like voice,  
 Dance as light as bird on wing,  
 Laugh for careless joys :  
 Yet it's I who wear the ring.

Jess and Jill will mate some day,  
 Surely, surely :  
 Ripen on to June through May,  
 While the sun shines make their  
 hay—

Slacken steps demurely :  
 Yet even there I lead the way.

20 February 1863.

### HELEN GREY

BECAUSE one loves you, Helen Grey,  
 Is that a reason you should pout,  
 And like a March wind veer about,  
 And frown, and say your shrewish  
 say ?

Don't strain the cord until it snaps,  
 Don't split the sound heart with  
 your wedge,

Don't cut your fingers with the  
 edge

Of your keen wit ; you may perhaps.

Because you're handsome, Helen  
 Grey,

Is that a reason to be proud ?  
 Your eyes are bold, your laugh is  
 loud,

Your steps go mincing on their way ;

But so you miss that modest charm  
 Which is the surest charm of all ;  
 Take heed, you yet may trip and  
 fall,  
 And no man care to stretch his arm.

Stoop from your cold height, Helen  
 Grey,

Come down, and take a lowlier  
 place,

Come down, to fill it now with  
 grace ;

Come down you must perforce some  
 day :

For years cannot be kept at bay,  
 And fading years will make you  
 old ;

Then in their turn will men seem  
 cold,

When you yourself are nipped and  
 grey.

23 February 1863.

### A YEAR'S WINDFALLS

ON the wind of January  
 Down flits the snow,  
 Travelling from the frozen North  
 As cold as it can blow.

Poor robin redbreast,  
 Look where he comes ;  
 Let him in to feel your fire,  
 And toss him of your crumbs.

On the wind in February  
 Snowflakes float still,  
 Half inclined to turn to rain,  
 Nipping, dripping, chill.  
 Then the thaws swell the streams,  
 And swollen rivers swell the  
 sea :

If the winter ever ends,  
 How pleasant it will be !

In the wind of windy March  
 The catkins drop down,  
 Curly, caterpillar-like,  
 Curious green and brown.  
 With concourse of nest-building birds  
 And leaf-buds by the way,  
 We begin to think of flowers  
 And life and nuts some day.

With the gusts of April  
 Rich fruit-tree blossoms fall,  
 On the hedged-in orchard-green,  
 From the southern wall.  
 Apple-trees and pear-trees  
 Shed petals white or pink,  
 Plum-trees and peach-trees ;  
 While sharp showers sink and sink.

Little brings the May breeze  
 Beside pure scent of flowers,  
 While all things wax and nothing  
 wanes

In lengthening daylight hours.  
 Across the hyacinth beds  
 The wind lags warm and sweet,  
 Across the hawthorn tops,  
 Across the blades of wheat.

In the wind of sunny June  
 Thrives the red rose crop,  
 Every day fresh blossoms blow  
 While the first leaves drop ;  
 White rose and yellow rose  
 And moss rose choice to find,  
 And the cottage cabbage-rose  
 Not one whit behind.

On the blast of scorched July  
 Drives the pelting hail  
 From thunderous lightning-clouds  
 that blot  
 Blue heaven grown lurid-pale.  
 Weedy waves are tossed ashore ;  
 Sea-things strange to sight

Gasp upon the barren shore  
 And fade away in light.

In the parching August wind  
 Corn-fields bow the head,  
 Sheltered in round valley depths,  
 On low hills outspread.  
 Early leaves drop loitering down  
 Weightless on the breeze,  
 First fruits of the year's decay  
 From the withering trees.

In brisk wind of September  
 The heavy-headed fruits  
 Shake upon their bending boughs  
 And drop from the shoots ;  
 Some glow golden in the sun,  
 Some show green and streaked,  
 Some set forth a purple bloom,  
 Some blush rosy-cheeked.

In strong blast of October  
 At the equinox,  
 Stirred up in his hollow bed  
 Broad ocean rocks ;  
 Plunge the ships on his bosom,  
 Leaps and plunges the foam,—  
 It's oh for mothers' sons at sea,  
 That they were safe at home !

In slack wind of November  
 The fog forms and shifts ;  
 All the world comes out again  
 When the fog lifts.  
 Loosened from their sapless twigs,  
 Leaves drop with every gust ;  
 Drifting, rustling, out of sight  
 In the damp or dust.

Last of all, December,  
 The year's sands nearly run,  
 Speeds on the shortest day,  
 Curtails the sun ;

With its bleak raw wind  
Lays the last leaves low,  
Brings back the nightly frosts,  
Brings back the snow.

26 February 1863.

### A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

'CROAK, croak, croak,'  
Thus the Raven spoke,  
Perched on his crooked tree,  
As hoarse as hoarse could be.  
Shun him and fear him,  
Lest the Bridegroom hear him ;  
Scout him and rout him  
With his ominous eye about him.

Yet 'Croak, croak, croak,'  
Still tolled from the oak,  
From that fatal black bird,  
Whether heard or unheard :  
'O ship upon the high seas,  
Freighted with lives and spices,  
Sink, O ship,' croaked the Raven :  
'Let the Bride mount to heaven.'

In a far foreign land  
Upon the wave-edged sand,  
Some friends gaze wistfully  
Across the glittering sea.  
'If we could clasp our sister,'  
Three say, 'now we have missed her !'  
'If we could kiss our daughter !'  
Two sigh across the water.

Oh the ship sails fast  
With silken flags at the mast,  
And the home-wind blows soft.  
But a Raven sits aloft,  
Chuckling and choking,  
Croaking, croaking, croaking.  
Let the beacon-fire blaze higher ;  
Bridegroom, watch ; the Bride draws  
nigher.

On a sloped sandy beach,  
Which the spring-tide billows reach,  
Stand a watchful throng  
Who have hoped and waited long :  
'Fie on this ship that tarries  
With the priceless freight it carries !  
The time seems long and longer :  
O languid wind, wax stronger ;'—

Whilst the Raven perched at ease  
Still croaks and does not cease,  
One monotonous note  
Tolled from his iron throat :  
'No father, no mother,  
But I have a sable brother :  
He sees where ocean flows to,  
And he knows what he knows too.'

A day and a night  
They kept watch worn and white ;  
A night and a day  
For the swift ship on its way :  
For the Bride and her maidens—  
Clear chimes the bridal cadence—  
For the tall ship that never  
Hove in sight for ever.

On either shore, some  
Stand in grief loud or dumb  
As the dreadful dread  
Grows certain though unsaid.  
For laughter there is weeping,  
And waking instead of sleeping,  
And a desperate sorrow  
Morrow after morrow.

Oh who knows the truth ?  
How she perished in her youth,  
And like a queen went down  
Pale in her royal crown :  
How she went up to glory  
From the sea-foam chill and hoary,  
From the sea-depth black and riven  
To the calm that is in Heaven.

They went down, all the crew,  
 The silks and spices too,  
 The great ones and the small,  
 One and all, one and all.  
 Was it through stress of weather,  
 Quicksands, rocks, or all together?  
 Only the Raven knows this,  
 And he will not disclose this.—

After a day and a year  
 The bridal bell chimes clear;  
 After a year and a day  
 The Bridegroom is brave and gay.  
 Love is sound, faith is rotten:  
 The old Bride is forgotten:—  
 Two ominous Ravens only  
 Remember, black and lonely.

4 March 1863.

### A DUMB FRIEND

I PLANTED a young tree when I was  
 young:  
 But now the tree is grown and I  
 am old:  
 There wintry robin shelters from the  
 cold  
 And tunes his silver tongue.

A green and living tree I planted it,  
 A glossy-foliaged tree of evergreen:  
 All through the noontide heat it  
 spread a screen  
 Whereunder I might sit.

But now I only watch it where it  
 towers:

I, sitting at my window, watch it tost  
 By rattling gale or silvered by the  
 frost;

Or, when sweet summer  
 flowers,

Wagging its round green head with  
 stately grace  
 In tender winds that kiss it and go  
 by.

It shows a green full age: and what  
 show I?

A faded wrinkled face.

So often have I watched it, till mine  
 eyes

Have filled with tears and I have  
 ceased to see,

That now it seems a very friend to  
 me,

In all my secrets wise.

A faithful pleasant friend, who year  
 by year

Grew with my growth and strength-  
 ened with my strength,

But whose green lifetime shows a  
 longer length:

When I shall not sit here

It still will bud in spring, and shed  
 rare leaves

In autumn, and in summer-heat give  
 shade,

And warmth in winter: when my  
 bed is made

In shade the cypress weaves.

24 March 1863.

### LIFE AND DEATH

LIFE is not sweet. One day it will  
 be sweet

To shut our eyes and die;

Nor feel the wild flowers blow, nor  
 birds dart by

With flitting butterfly,

Nor grass grow long above our  
 heads and feet,

Nor hear the happy lark that soars  
sky-high,  
Nor sigh that spring is fleet and  
summer fleet,  
Nor mark the waxing wheat,  
Nor know who sits in our accustomed  
seat.

Life is not good. One day it will be  
good  
To die, then live again ;  
To sleep meanwhile ; so, not to feel  
the wane  
Of shrunk leaves dropping in  
the wood,  
Nor hear the foamy lashing of the  
main,  
Nor mark the blackened bean-fields,  
nor, where stood  
Rich ranks of golden grain,  
Only dead refuse stubble clothe the  
plain :  
Asleep from risk, asleep from  
pain.

24 April 1863.

## TWILIGHT NIGHT

### I

We met hand to hand,  
We clasped hands close and fast,  
As close as oak and ivy stand :  
But it is past ;  
Come day, come night, day comes  
at last.

We loosed hand from hand,  
We parted face from face :  
Each went his way to his own land  
At his own pace,  
Each went to fill his separate  
place.

If we should meet one day,  
If both should not forget,  
We shall clasp hands the accustomed  
way,  
As when we met,  
So long ago, as I remember yet.  
26 August 1864.

### II

Where my heart is (wherever that  
may be)  
Might I but follow !  
If you fly thither over heath and lea,  
O honey-seeking bee,  
O careless swallow,  
Bid some for whom I watch keep  
watch for me.

Alas that we must dwell, my heart  
and I,  
So far asunder !  
Hours wax to days, and days and  
days creep by ;  
I watch with wistful eye,  
I wait and wonder :  
When will that day draw nigh—that  
hour draw nigh ?

Not yesterday, and not I think to-day ;  
Perhaps to-morrow.  
Day after day 'To-morrow' thus I  
say :  
I watched so yesterday  
In hope and sorrow,  
Again to-day I watch the accustomed  
way.  
25 June 1863.

## THE POOR GHOST

'OH whence do you come, my dear  
friend, to me,  
With your golden hair all fallen  
below your knee,

And your face as white as snowdrops  
on the lea,  
And your voice as hollow as the  
hollow sea ?'

'From the other world I come back  
to you :  
My locks are uncurled with dripping  
drenching dew.  
You know the old, whilst I know the  
new :  
But to-morrow you shall know this  
too.'

'Oh not to-morrow into the dark, I  
pray ;  
Oh not to-morrow, too soon to go  
away :  
Here I feel warm and well-content  
and gay :  
Give me another year, another day.'

'Am I so changed in a day and a  
night  
That mine own only love shrinks  
from me with fright,  
Is fain to turn away to left or right  
And cover up his eyes from the  
sight ?'

'Indeed I loved you, my chosen  
friend,  
I loved you for life, but life has an  
end ;  
Through sickness I was ready to  
tend :  
But death mars all, which we cannot  
mend.

'Indeed I loved you ; I love you yet,  
If you will stay where your bed is  
set,  
Where I have planted a violet,  
Which the wind waves, which the  
dew makes wet.'

'Life is gone, then love too is gone,  
It was a reed that I leant upon :  
Never doubt I will leave you alone  
And not wake you rattling bone  
with bone.

'I go home alone to my bed,  
Dug deep at the foot and deep at  
the head,  
Roofed in with a load of lead,  
Warm enough for the forgotten dead.

'But why did your tears soak through  
the clay,  
And why did your sobs wake me  
where I lay ?  
I was away, far enough away :  
Let me sleep now till the Judgment  
Day.'

25 July 1863.

## MARGERY

WHAT shall we do with Margery ?  
She lies and cries upon her bed,  
All lily-pale from foot to head ;  
Her heart is sore as sore can be :  
Poor guileless shamefaced Margery.

A foolish girl, to love a man  
And let him know she loved him  
so !  
She should have tried a different  
plan :  
Have loved, but not have let him  
know :  
Then he perhaps had loved her so.

What can we do with Margery  
Who has no relish for her food ?  
We'd take her with us to the sea—  
Across the sea—but where's the  
good ?  
She'd fret alike on land and sea.



Yes, what the neighbours say is true :  
Girls should not make themselves  
so cheap.

But now it's done what can we do ?  
I hear her moaning in her sleep,  
Moaning and sobbing in her sleep.

I think—and I'm of flesh and  
blood—

Were I that man for whom she  
cares,

I would not cost her tears and  
prayers

To leave her just alone like mud,  
Fretting her simple heart with  
cares.

A year ago she was a child,  
Now she's a woman in her grief ;  
The year's now at the falling leaf ;  
At budding of the leaves she smiled :  
Poor foolish harmless foolish child.

It was her own fault ? so it was.  
If every own fault found us out,  
Dogged us and snared us round-  
about,

What comfort should we take because  
Not half our due we thus wrung  
out ?

At any rate the question stands :  
What now to do with Margery,  
A weak poor creature on our hands ?  
Something we must do : I'll not  
see

Her blossom fade, sweet Margery.

Perhaps a change may after all  
Prove best for her : to leave  
behind

These home-sights seen time out  
of mind ;

To get beyond the narrow wall  
Of home, and learn home is not all.

Perhaps this way she may forget,  
Not all at once, but in a while :  
May come to wonder how she set  
Her heart on this slight thing,  
and smile  
At her own folly, in a while.

Yet this I say and I maintain :  
Were I the man she's fretting for,  
I should my very self abhor  
If I could leave her to her pain,  
Uncomforted to tears and pain.

1 October 1863.

## LAST NIGHT

WHERE were you last night ? I  
watched at the gate ;

I went down early, I stayed down  
late.

Were you snug at home, I  
should like to know,  
Or were you in the coppice wheed-  
ling Kate ?

She's a fine girl, with a fine clear  
skin ;

Easy to woo, perhaps not hard to  
win.

Speak up like a man and tell  
me the truth :

I'm not one to grow downhearted  
and thin.

If you love her best, speak up  
like a man ;

It's not I will stand in the light  
of your plan :

Some girls might cry and scold  
you a bit,

And say they couldn't bear it ; but  
I can.



Love was pleasant enough, and  
the days went fast ;  
Pleasant while it lasted, but it needn't  
last ;

Awhile on the wax, and awhile  
on the wane,  
Now dropped away into the past.

Was it pleasant to you? To me  
it was :

Now clean gone as an image from  
glass,

As a goodly rainbow that fades  
away,  
As dew that steams upward from  
the grass ;

As the first spring day or the last  
summer day,

As the sunset flush that leaves  
heaven grey,

As a flame burnt out for lack of  
oil,

Which no pains relight or ever  
may.

Good luck to Kate and good luck  
to you :

I guess she'll be kind when you  
come to woo.

I wish her a pretty face that  
will last,

I wish her a husband steady and  
true.

Hate you? not I, my very good  
friend ;

All things begin and all have an  
end.

But let broken be broken ; I  
put no faith

In quacks who set up to patch  
and mend.

Just my love and one word to  
Kate—

Not to let time slip if she means  
to mate ;

For even such a thing has been  
known

As to miss the chance while we  
weigh and wait.

*November 1863.*

## SOMEWHERE OR OTHER

SOMEWHERE or other there must  
surely be

The face not seen, the voice not  
heard,

The heart that not yet—never yet  
—ah me !

Made answer to my word.

Somewhere or other, may be near  
or far ;

Past land and sea, clean out of  
sight ;

Beyond the wandering moon, beyond  
the star

That tracks her night by night

Somewhere or other, may be far or  
near ;

With just a wall, a hedge, be-  
tween ;

With just the last leaves of the  
dying year

Fallen on a turf grown green.

*Towards November 1863.*

## A CHILL

WHAT can lambkins do

All the keen night through?

Nestle by their woolly mother

The careful ewe.

What can nestlings do  
In the nightly dew?  
Sleep beneath their mother's wing  
Till day breaks anew.

If in field or tree  
There might only be  
Such a warm soft sleeping-place  
Found for me!

*Towards December 1863.*

### SUMMER

WINTER is cold-hearted,  
Spring is yea and nay,  
Autumn is a weathercock  
Blown every way.  
Summer days for me  
When every leaf is on its tree;

When Robin's not a beggar,  
And Jenny Wren's a bride,  
And larks hang singing, singing,  
singing,

Over the wheat-fields wide,  
And anchored lilies ride,  
And the pendulum spider  
Swings from side to side;

And blue-black beetles transact  
business,

And gnats fly in a host,  
And furry caterpillars hasten  
That no time be lost,  
And moths grow fat and thrive,  
And ladybirds arrive.

Before green apples blush,  
Before green nuts embrown,  
Why one day in the country  
Is worth a month in town;  
Is worth a day and a year  
Of the dusty, musty, lag-last fashion  
That days drone elsewhere.

*15 January 1864.*

### BEAUTY IS VAIN

WHILE roses are so red,  
While lilies are so white,  
Shall a woman exalt her face  
Because it gives delight?  
She's not so sweet as a rose,  
A lily's straighter than she,  
And if she were as red or white  
She'd be but one of three.

Whether she flush in love's summer  
Or in its winter grow pale,  
Whether she flaunt her beauty  
Or hide it away in a veil,  
Be she red or white  
And stand she erect or bowed,  
Time will win the race he runs with  
her,  
And hide her away in a shroud.  
*20 January 1864.*

### WHAT WOULD I GIVE!

WHAT would I give for a heart of  
flesh to warm me through,  
Instead of this heart of stone ice-  
cold whatever I do!  
Hard and cold and small, of all  
hearts the worst of all.

What would I give for words, if  
only words would come!  
But now in its misery my spirit has  
fallen dumb.  
O merry friends, go your way, I  
have never a word to say.

What would I give for tears! not  
smiles but scalding tears,  
To wash the black mark clean, and  
to thaw the frost of years,  
To wash the stain ingrain, and to  
make me clean again.

*28 January 1864.*

## THE GHOST'S PETITION

'THERE'S a footstep coming ; look  
out and see.'—

'The leaves are falling, the wind  
is calling ;  
No one cometh across the lea.'—

'There's a footstep coming ; O  
sister, look.'—

'The ripple flashes, the white  
foam dashes ;  
No one cometh across the brook.'—

'But he promised that he would  
come :

To-night, to-morrow, in joy or  
sorrow,  
He must keep his word, and must  
come home.

'For he promised that he would  
come :

His word was given ; from earth  
or heaven,  
He must keep his word, and must  
come home.

'Go to sleep, my sweet sister Jane ;  
You can slumber, who need not  
number

Hour after hour, in doubt and pain.

'I shall sit here awhile, and watch ;  
Listening, hoping, for one hand  
groping

In deep shadow to find the latch.'

After the dark and before the light,  
One lay sleeping ; and one sat  
weeping,

Who had watched and wept the  
weary night.

After the night and before the day  
One lay sleeping ; and one sat  
weeping—

Watching, weeping for one away.

There came a footstep climbing the  
stair ;

Some one standing out on the  
landing

Shook the door like a puff of air—

Shook the door and in he passed.

Did he enter ? In the room centred  
Stood her husband : the door shut  
fast.

'O Robin, but you are cold—

Chilled with the night-dew : so  
lily-white you

Look like a stray lamb from our fold.

'O Robin, but you are late :

Come and sit near me—sit here  
and cheer me.'—

(Blue the flame burnt in the grate.)

'Lay not down your head on my  
breast :

I cannot hold you, kind wife, no  
fold you

In the shelter that you love best.

'Feel not after my clasping hand :

I am but a shadow, come from  
the meadow

Where many lie, but no tree can  
stand.

'We are trees which have shed their  
leaves :

Our heads, lie low there, but no  
tears flow there ;

Only I grieve for my wife who  
grieves.

I could rest if you would not moan  
Hour after hour ; I have no power  
To shut my ears where I lie alone.

I could rest if you would not cry ;  
But there's no sleeping while you  
sit weeping—

Watching, weeping so bitterly.'—

Woe's me ! woe's me ! for this I  
have heard.

Oh night of sorrow !—oh black  
to-morrow !

Is it thus that you keep your word ?

O you who used so to shelter me  
Warm from the least wind—why,  
now the east wind  
is warmer than you, whom I quake  
to see.

O my husband of flesh and blood,  
For whom my mother I left, and  
brother,  
And all I had, accounting it good,

What do you do there, underground,  
In the dark hollow ? I'm fain to  
follow.

What do you do there ?—what have  
you found ?'—

What I do there I must not tell :  
But I have plenty ; kind wife,  
content ye :

It is well with us—it is well.

Tender hand hath made our nest ;  
Our fear is ended, our hope is  
blended

With present pleasure, and we have  
rest.'

Oh but Robin, I'm fain to come,  
If your present days are so  
pleasant,  
For my days are so wearisome.

' Yet I'll dry my tears for your sake :  
Why should I tease you, who  
cannot please you  
Any more with the pains I take ?'

7 April 1864.

## HOPING AGAINST HOPE

IF he would come to-day, to-day,  
to-day,

Oh what a day to-day would be !  
But now he's away, miles and miles  
away

From me across the sea.

O little bird, flying, flying, flying  
To your nest in the warm west,  
Tell him as you pass that I am dying,  
As you pass home to your nest.

I have a sister, I have a brother,  
A faithful hound, a tame white  
dove ;

But I had another, once I had  
another,

And I miss him, my love, my love !

In this weary world it is so cold, so  
cold,

While I sit here all alone ;  
I would not like to wait and to grow  
old,

But just to be dead and gone.

Make me fair when I lie dead on  
my bed,

Fair where I am lying :  
Perhaps he may come and look upon  
me dead—

He for whom I am dying.

Dig my grave for two, with a stone  
to show it,

And on the stone write my  
name :

If he never comes, I shall never  
know it,

But sleep on all the same.

12 April 1864.

### SUNSHINE

'THERE'S little sunshine in my heart,  
Slack to spring, lead to sink :

There's little sunshine in the world,  
I think.'

'There's glow of sunshine in my  
heart

(Cool wind, cool the glow) :

There's flood of sunshine in the  
world,

I know.'

Now if of these one spoke the truth,  
One spoke more or less :

But which was which I will not tell :  
You guess.

31 May 1864.

### MEETING

IF we shall live, we live :

If we shall die, we die :

If we live we shall meet again :

But to-night, good-bye.

One word, let but one be heard—

What, not one word ?

If we sleep we shall wake again

And see to-morrow's light :

If we wake, we shall meet again :

But to-night, good-night.

Good-night, my lost and  
found—

Still not a sound ?

If we live, we must part :

If we die, we part in pain :

If we die, we shall part

Only to meet again.

By those tears on either cheek,

To-morrow you will speak.

To meet, worth living for :

Worth dying for, to meet.

To meet, worth parting for :

Bitter forgot in sweet.

To meet, worth parting before

Never to part more.

11 June 1864.

### TWICE

I TOOK my heart in my hand,

(O my love, O my love),

I said : Let me fall or stand,

Let me live or die,

But this once hear me speak—

(O my love, O my love)—

Yet a woman's words are weak ;

You should speak, not I.

You took my heart in your hand

With a friendly smile,

With a critical eye you scanned,

Then set it down,

And said : It is still unripe,

Better wait awhile ;

Wait while the skylarks pipe,

Till the corn grows brown.

As you set it down it broke—

Broke, but I did not wince ;

I smiled at the speech you spoke,

At your judgment that I heard :

But I have not often smiled

Since then, nor questioned since,

Nor cared for corn-flowers wild,

Nor sung with the singing bird.

I take my heart in my hand,  
 O my God, O my God,  
 My broken heart in my hand :  
 Thou hast seen, judge Thou.  
 My hope was written on sand,  
 O my God, O my God :  
 Now let Thy judgment stand—  
 Yea, judge me now.

This contemned of a man,  
 This marred one heedless day,  
 His heart take Thou to scan  
 Both within and without :  
 Refine with fire its gold,  
 Purge Thou its dross away—  
 Yea hold it in Thy hold,  
 Whence none can pluck it out.

I take my heart in my hand—  
 I shall not die, but live—  
 Before Thy face I stand ;  
 I, for Thou callest such :  
 All that I have I bring,  
 All that I am I give ;  
 Praise Thou and I shall sing,  
 But shall not question much.

June 1864.

## A FARM WALK

THE year stood at its equinox  
 And bluff the North was blowing,  
 A bleat of lambs came from the  
 flocks,  
 Green hardy things were growing ;  
 I met a maid with shining locks  
 Where milky kine were lowing.

She wore a kerchief on her neck,  
 Her bare arm showed its dimple,  
 Her apron spread without a speck,  
 Her air was frank and simple.

She milked into a wooden pail  
 And sang a country ditty,  
 An innocent fond lovers' tale  
 That was not wise nor witty,  
 Pathetically rustical,  
 Too pointless for the city.

She kept in time without a beat  
 As true as church-bell ringers,  
 Unless she tapped time with her  
 feet,  
 Or squeezed it with her fingers ;  
 Her clear unstudied notes were  
 sweet  
 As many a practised singer's.

I stood a minute out of sight,  
 Stood silent for a minute,  
 To eye the pail, and creamy white  
 The frothing milk within it ;

To eye the comely milking maid,  
 Herself so fresh and creamy.  
 'Good day to you,' at last I said ;  
 She turned her head to see me :  
 'Good day,' she said with lifted  
 head ;  
 Her eyes looked soft and dreamy.

And all the while she milked and  
 milked  
 The grave cow heavy-laden.  
 I've seen grand ladies plumed and  
 silked,  
 But not a sweeter maiden ;

But not a sweeter fresher maid  
 Than this in homely cotton,  
 Whose pleasant face and silky braid  
 I have not yet forgotten.

Seven springs have passed since  
 then, as I  
 Count with a sober sorrow :



Seven springs have come and passed  
me by,  
And spring sets in to-morrow.

I've half a mind to shake myself  
Free just for once from London,  
To set my work upon the shelf  
And leave it done or undone ;

To run down by the early train,  
Whirl down with shriek and  
whistle,  
And feel the bluff North blow again,  
And mark the sprouting thistle  
Set up on waste patch of the lane  
Its green and tender bristle ;

And spy the scarce-blown violet  
banks,  
Crisp primrose leaves and others,  
And watch the lambs leap at their  
pranks  
And butt their patient mothers. —

Alas one point in all my plan  
My serious thoughts demur to :  
Seven years have passed for maid  
and man,  
Seven years have passed for her  
too ;

Perhaps my rose is overblown,  
Not rosy or too rosy ;  
Perhaps in farmhouse of her own  
Some husband keeps her cosy,  
Where I should show a face un-  
known. —  
Good-bye, my wayside posy.  
xx July 1864.

#### UNDER WILLOWS

UNDER willows among the graves  
One was walking, ah welladay !

Where each willow her green bough  
waves,  
Come April prime, come May  
Under willows among the graves  
She met her lost love, ah welladay  
Where in Autumn each wild win-  
raves  
And whirls sere leaves away.

He looked at her with a smile,  
She looked at him with a sigh,  
Both paused to look awhile :  
Then he passed by, —  
Passed by and whistled a tune :  
She stood silent and still :  
It was the sunniest day in June,  
Yet one felt a chill.

Under willows among the graves  
I know a certain black black pool  
Scarce wrinkled when Autumn raves  
Under the turf is cool ;  
Under the water it must be cold :  
Winter comes cold when Summer  
past :  
Though she live to be old, so old,  
She shall die at last.  
27 July 1864.

#### A SKETCH

THE blindest buzzard that I know  
Does not wear wings to spread  
and stir ;  
Nor does my special mole wear  
fur,  
And grub among the roots below :  
He sports a tail indeed, but then  
It's to a coat : he's man with men  
His quill is cut to a pen.

In other points our friend's a mole  
A buzzard, beyond scope of speech  
He sees not what's within his  
reach,



Misreads the part, ignores the whole;  
 Misreads the part, so reads in vain,  
 Ignores the whole though patent  
 plain,—

Misreads both parts again.

My blindest buzzard that I know,  
 My special mole, 'when will you  
 see?

Oh no, you must not look at me,  
 There's nothing hid for me to show.  
 I might show facts as plain as day:  
 But, since your eyes are blind, you'd  
 say,  
 'Where? What?' and turn  
 away.

15 August 1864.

### BIRD OR BEAST?

Did any bird come flying  
 After Adam and Eve,  
 When the door was shut against them  
 And they sat down to grieve?

I think not Eve's peacock  
 Splendid to see,  
 And I think not Adam's eagle;  
 But a dove may be.

Did any beast come pushing  
 Through the thorny hedge  
 Into the thorny thistly world,  
 Out from Eden's edge?

I think not a lion,  
 Though his strength is such;  
 But an innocent loving lamb  
 May have done as much.

If the dove preached from her bough,  
 And the lamb from his sod,  
 The lamb and the dove  
 Were preachers sent from God.

15 August 1864.

R

### SONGS IN A CORNFIELD

A SONG in a cornfield

Where corn begins to fall,  
 Where reapers are reaping,  
 Reaping one, reaping all.  
 Sing pretty Lettice,  
 Sing Rachel, sing May;  
 Only Marian cannot sing  
 While her sweetheart's away.

Where is he gone to  
 And why does he stay?  
 He came across the green sea  
 But for a day,  
 Across the deep green sea  
 To help with the hay.  
 His hair was curly yellow  
 And his eyes were grey,  
 He laughed a merry laugh  
 And said a sweet say.

Where is he gone to  
 That he comes not home?  
 To-day or to-morrow  
 He surely will come.  
 Let him haste to joy,  
 Lest he lag for sorrow,  
 For one weeps to-day  
 Who'll not weep to-morrow;  
 To-day she must weep  
 For gnawing sorrow,  
 To-night she may sleep  
 And not wake to-morrow.

May sang with Rachel  
 In the waxing warm weather,  
 Lettice sang with them,  
 They sang all together:—

'Take the wheat in your arm  
 Whilst day is broad above,  
 Take the wheat to your bosom,  
 But not a false false love.

2 B

Out in the fields  
 Summer heat gloweth,  
 Out in the fields  
 Summer wind bloweth,  
 Out in the fields  
 Summer friend showeth,  
 Out in the fields  
 Summer wheat groweth ;  
 But in the winter,  
 When summer heat is dead  
 And summer wind has veered  
 And summer friend has fled,  
 Only summer wheat remaineth,  
 White cakes and bread.  
 Take the wheat, clasp the wheat  
 That's food for maid and dove ;  
 Take the wheat to your bosom,  
 But not a false false love.'

A silence of full noontide heat  
 Grew on them at their toil :  
 The farmer's dog woke up from sleep,  
 The green snake hid her coil  
 Where grass stood thickest ; bird  
 and beast

Sought shadows as they could,  
 The reaping men and women paused  
 And sat down where they stood ;  
 They ate and drank and were re-  
 freshed,

For rest from toil is good.

While the reapers took their ease,  
 Their sickles lying by,  
 Rachel sang a second strain,  
 And singing seemed to sigh :—

'There goes the swallow—  
 Could we but follow !  
 Hasty swallow, stay,  
 Point us out the way ;  
 Look back, swallow, turn back,  
 swallow, stop, swallow.

'There went the swallow—  
 Too late to follow :  
 Lost our note of way,  
 Lost our chance to-day ;  
 Good-bye, swallow, sunny swallow  
 wise swallow.

'After the swallow  
 All sweet things follow :  
 All things go their way,  
 Only we must stay,  
 Must not follow ; good-bye, swallow,  
 good swallow.'

Then listless Marian raised her head  
 Among the nodding sheaves ;  
 Her voice was sweeter than that  
 voice ;

She sang like one who grieves :  
 Her voice was sweeter than its wont  
 Among the nodding sheaves ;  
 All wondered while they heard her  
 sing

Like one who hopes and grieves :—

'Deeper than the hail can smite,  
 Deeper than the frost can bite,  
 Deep asleep through day and night  
 Our delight.

'Now thy sleep no pang can break  
 No to-morrow bid thee wake,  
 Not our sobs who sit and ache  
 For thy sake.

'Is it dark or light below ?  
 Oh but is it cold like snow ?  
 Dost thou feel the green things grow  
 Fast or slow ?

'Is it warm or cold beneath,  
 Oh but is it cold like death ?  
 Cold like death, without a breath,  
 Cold like death ?'

If he comes to-day,  
 He will find her weeping ;  
 If he comes to-morrow,  
 He will find her sleeping ;  
 If he comes the next day,  
 He'll not find her at all—  
 He may tear his curling hair,  
 Beat his breast, and call.

26 August 1864.

### IF I HAD WORDS

If I had words, if I had words  
 At least to vent my misery :—  
 But muter than the speechless  
 herds  
 I have no voice wherewith to cry.  
 I have no strength to lift my hands,  
 I have no heart to lift mine eye,  
 My soul is bound with brazen  
 bands,  
 My soul is crushed and like to  
 die.  
 My thoughts that wander here and  
 there,  
 That wander wander listlessly,  
 Bring nothing back to cheer my  
 care,  
 Nothing that I may live thereby.  
 My heart is broken in my breast,  
 My breath is but a broken sigh—  
 Oh if there be a land of rest  
 It is far off, it is not nigh.  
 If I had wings as hath a dove,  
 If I had wings that I might fly,  
 I yet would seek the land of love  
 Where fountains run which run  
 not dry :  
 Though there be none that road to  
 tell,  
 And long that road is verily :  
 Then if I lived I should do well,  
 And if I died I should but die.

If I had wings as hath a dove,  
 I would not sift the what and  
 why,  
 I would make haste to find out Love,  
 If not to find at least to try.  
 I would make haste to Love, my  
 rest—  
 To Love, my truth that doth not  
 lie :

Then if I lived it might be best,  
 Or if I died I could but die.

3 September 1864.

### JESSIE CAMERON

'JESSIE, Jessie Cameron,  
 Hear me but this once,' quoth he.  
 'Good luck go with you, neighbour's  
 son,  
 But I'm no mate for you,' quoth  
 she.  
 Day was verging toward the night  
 There beside the moaning sea :  
 Dimness overtook the light  
 There where the breakers be.  
 'O Jessie, Jessie Cameron,  
 I have loved you long and  
 true.'—  
 'Good luck go with you, neighbour's  
 son,  
 But I'm no mate for you.'

She was a careless fearless girl,  
 And made her answer plain,  
 Outspoken she to earl or churl,  
 Kindhearted in the main,  
 But somewhat heedless with her  
 tongue  
 And apt at causing pain ;  
 A mirthful maiden she and young,  
 Most fair for bliss or bane.

'Oh long ago I told you so,  
I tell you so to-day :  
Go you your way, and let me go  
Just my own free way.'

The sea swept in with moan and  
foam,

Quickening the stretch of sand ;  
They stood almost in sight of home ;  
He strove to take her hand.

'Oh can't you take your answer  
then,

And won't you understand ?

For me you're not the man of men,  
I've other plans are planned.

You're good for Madge, or good for  
Cis,

Or good for Kate, may be :

But what's to me the good of this  
While you're not good for me ?'

They stood together on the beach,  
They two alone,

And louder waxed his urgent speech,  
His patience almost gone :

'Oh say but one kind word to me,  
Jessie, Jessie Cameron.'—

'I'd be too proud to beg,' quoth she,  
And pride was in her tone.

And pride was in her lifted head,  
And in her angry eye,

And in her foot, which might have  
fled

But would not fly.

Some say that he had gipsy blood,  
That in his heart was guile :

Yet he had gone through fire and  
flood

Only to win her smile.

Some say his grandam was a witch,  
A black witch from beyond the  
Nile,

Who kept an image in a niche  
And talked with it the while.

And by her hut far down the lane  
Some say they would not pass at  
night,

Lest they should hear an unked strain  
Or see an unked sight.

Alas for Jessie Cameron !—

The sea crept moaning, moaning ;  
nigher ;

She should have hastened to be-  
gone,—

The sea swept higher, breaking ;  
by her :—

She should have hastened to her  
home

While yet the west was flushed  
with fire,—

But now her feet are in the foam,

The sea-foam sweeping higher.

O mother, linger at your door,

And light your lamp to make it  
plain ;

But Jessie she comes home no more,  
No more again.

They stood together on the strand,

They only each by each ;

Home, her home, was close at hand,  
Utterly out of reach.

Her mother in the chimney nook

Heard a startled sea-gull screech,

But never turned her head to look

Towards the darkening beach :

Neighbours here and neighbours  
there

Heard one scream, as if a bird

Shrilly screaming cleft the air :—

That was all they heard.

Jessie she comes home no more,

Comes home never ;

Her lover's step sounds at his door

No more for ever.

And boats may search upon the sea

And search along the river,

But none know where the bodies be ;  
 Sea-winds that shiver,  
 Sea-birds that breast the blast,  
 Sea-waves swelling,  
 Keep the secret first and last  
 Of their dwelling.

Whether the tide so hemmed them  
 round  
 With its pitiless flow  
 That when they would have gone  
 they found  
 No way to go ;

Whether she scorned him to the last  
 With words flung to and fro,  
 Or clung to him when hope was past,  
 None will ever know :  
 Whether he helped or hindered her,  
 Threw up his life or lost it well,  
 The troubled sea for all its stir  
 Finds no voice to tell.

Only watchers by the dying  
 Have thought they heard one pray  
 Wordless, urgent ; and replying  
 One seem to say him nay :

And watchers by the dead have  
 heard

A windy swell from miles away,  
 With sobs and screams, but not a  
 word

Distinct for them to say :  
 And watchers out at sea have caught  
 Glimpse of a pale gleam here or  
 there,

Come and gone as quick as thought,  
 Which might be hand or hair.

*October 1864.*

### GROWN AND FLOWN

I LOVED my love from green of  
 Spring  
 Until sere Autumn's fall ;

But now that leaves are withering  
 How should one love at all ?  
 One heart's too small  
 For hunger, cold, love, everything.

I loved my love on sunny days  
 Until late Summer's wane ;  
 But now that frost begins to glaze  
 How should one love again ?  
 Nay, love and pain  
 Walk wide apart in diverse ways.

I loved my love—alas to see  
 That this should be, alas !  
 I thought that this could scarcely  
 be,  
 Yet has it come to pass :  
 Sweet sweet love was,  
 Now bitter bitter grown to me.

*21 December 1864.*

### EVE

'WHILE I sit at the door,  
 Sick to gaze within,  
 Mine eye weepeth sore  
 For sorrow and sin :  
 As a tree my sin stands  
 To darken all lands ;  
 Death is the fruit it bore.

'How have Eden bowers grown  
 Without Adam to bend them ?  
 How have Eden flowers blown,  
 Squandering their sweet breath,  
 Without me to tend them ?  
 The Tree of Life was ours,  
 Tree twelvefold-fruited,  
 Most lofty tree that flowers,  
 Most deeply rooted :  
 I chose the Tree of Death.

'Hadst thou but said me nay,  
Adam my brother,  
I might have pined away—  
I, but none other :  
God might have let thee stay  
Safe in our garden,  
By putting me away  
Beyond all pardon.

'I, Eve, sad mother  
Of all who must live,  
I, not another,  
Plucked bitterest fruit to give  
My friend, husband, lover.  
O wanton eyes, run over !  
Who but I should grieve ?  
Cain hath slain his brother :  
Of all who must die mother,  
Miserable Eve !'

Thus she sat weeping,  
Thus Eve our mother,  
Where one lay sleeping  
Slain by his brother.  
Greatest and least  
Each piteous beast  
To hear her voice  
Forgot his joys  
And set aside his feast.

The mouse paused in his walk  
And dropped his wheaten stalk ;  
Grave cattle wagged their heads  
In rumination ;  
The eagle gave a cry  
From his cloud station :  
Larks on thyme beds  
Forbore to mount or sing ;  
Bees drooped upon the wing ;  
The raven perched on high  
Forgot his ration ;  
The conies in their rock,  
A feeble nation,  
Quaked sympathetical ;

The mocking-bird left off to mock ;  
Huge camels knelt as if  
In deprecation ;  
The kind hart's tears were falling ;  
Chattered the wistful stork ;  
Dove-voices with a dying fall  
Cooed desolation,  
Answering grief by grief.

Only the serpent in the dust,  
Wriggling and crawling,  
Grinned an evil grin and thrust  
His tongue out with its fork.

30 January 1865.

### SHALL I FORGET ?

SHALL I forget on this side of the  
grave ?

I promise nothing : you must wait  
and see,  
Patient and brave.  
(O my soul, watch with him, and he  
with me.)

Shall I forget in peace of Paradise ?  
I promise nothing : follow, friend,  
and see,  
Faithful and wise.  
(O my soul, lead the way he walks  
with me.)

21 February 1865.

### AMOR MUNDI

'OH where are you going with your  
love-locks flowing,  
On the west wind blowing along  
this valley track ?'  
'The downhill-path is easy, come  
with me an it please ye,  
We shall escape the uphill by  
never turning back.'



So they two went together in glowing August weather,  
The honey-breathing heather lay to their left and right;  
And dear she was to doat on, her swift feet seemed to float on  
The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to alight.

'Oh what is that in heaven where grey cloud-flakes are seven,  
Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the rainy skirt?'

'Oh that's a meteor sent us, a message dumb, portentous,  
An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.'

'Oh what is that glides quickly where velvet flowers grow thickly,  
Their scent comes rich and sickly?'  
'A scaled and hooded worm.'

'Oh what's that in the hollow, so pale I quake to follow?'

'Oh that's a thin dead body which waits the eternal term.'

'Turn again, O my sweetest,—turn again, false and fleetest:  
This beaten way thou beatest, I fear, is hell's own track.'

'Nay, too steep for hill mounting;  
Nay, too late for cost counting:  
This downhill path is easy, but there's no turning back.'

21 February 1865.

### FROM SUNSET TO RISE STAR

Go from me, summer friends, and tarry not:  
I am no summer friend, but wintry cold;

A silly sheep benighted from the fold,  
A sluggard with a thorn-choked garden plot.

Take counsel, sever from my lot your lot,

Dwell in your pleasant places, hoard your gold;

Lest you with me should shiver on the wold,

Athirst and hungering on a barren spot.

For I have hedged me with a thorny hedge,

I live alone, I look to die alone.

Yet sometimes when a wind sighs through the sedge

Ghosts of my buried years and friends come back,

My heart goes sighing after swallows flown

On sometime summer's unreturning track.

22 February 1865.

### MAGGIE A LADY

YOU must not call me Maggie, you must not call me Dear,

For I'm Lady of the Manor now stately to see;

And if there comes a babe, as there may some happy year,

'Twill be little lord or lady at my knee.

Oh but what ails you, my sailor cousin Phil,

That you shake and turn white like a cockcrow ghost?

You're as white as I turned once down by the mill,

When one told me you and ship and crew were lost.



Philip my playfellow, when we were  
boy and girl

(It was the Miller's Nancy told  
it to me),

Philip with the merry life in lip and  
curl,

Philip my playfellow drowned in  
the sea !

I thought I should have fainted, but  
I did not faint ;

I stood stunned at the moment,  
scarcely sad,

Till I raised my wail of desolate  
complaint

For you, my cousin, brother, all  
I had.

They said I looked so pale—some  
say so fair—

My lord stopped in passing to  
soothe me back to life :

I know I missed a ringlet from my  
hair

Next morning ; and now I am  
his wife.

Look at my gown, Philip, and look  
at my ring—

I'm all crimson and gold from  
top to toe :

All day long I sit in the sun and  
sing,

Where in the sun red roses blush  
and blow.

And I'm the rose of roses, says my  
lord ;

And to him I'm more than the  
sun in the sky,

While I hold him fast with the  
golden cord

Of a curl, with the eyelash of an  
eye.

His mother said fie, and his sisters  
cried shame,

His highborn ladies cried shame  
from their place :

They said fie when they only heard  
my name,

But fell silent when they saw my  
face.

Am I so fair, Philip ? Philip, did  
you think

I was so fair when we played boy  
and girl

Where blue forget-me-nots bloomed  
on the brink

Of our stream which the mill-  
wheel sent awlirl ?

If I was fair then, sure I'm fairer  
now,

Sitting where a score of servants  
stand,

With a coronet on high days for my  
brow

And almost a sceptre for my hand.

You're but a sailor, Philip, weather-  
beaten brown,

A stranger on land and at home  
on the sea,

Coasting as best you may from town  
to town :

Coasting along do you often think  
of me ?

I'm a great lady in a sheltered  
bower,

With hands grown white through  
having nought to do :

Yet sometimes I think of you hour  
after hour

Till I nigh wish myself a child  
with you.

23 February 1865.

## DEAD HOPE

HOPE newborn one pleasant morn  
 Died at even :  
 Hope dead lives nevermore,  
 No not in heaven.

His shroud were but a cloud  
 To weep itself away—  
 Where were he buried underground  
 To sprout some day !  
 But dead and gone is dead and gone,  
 Vainly wept upon.

Thought we place above his face  
 To mark the spot,  
 But it shows a barren place  
 In our lot.

Hope has birth no more on earth  
 Morn or even ;  
 Hope dead lives nevermore,  
 No not in heaven.  
*15 March 1865.*

## EN ROUTE

HEREFORE art thou strange, and  
 not my mother ?  
 Thou hast stolen my heart and  
 broken it :  
 Would that I might call thy sons  
 ' My brother,'  
 Call thy daughters ' Sister sweet' :  
 Lying in thy lap, not in another,  
 Dying at thy feet.

Farewell, land of love, Italy,  
 Sister-land of Paradise :  
 With mine own feet I have trodden  
 thee,  
 Have seen with mine own eyes :  
 Remember, thou forgettest me,  
 I remember thee.

Blessed be the land that warms my  
 heart,  
 And the kindly clime that cheers,  
 And the cordial faces clear from art,  
 And the tongue sweet in mine ears:  
 Take my heart, its truest tenderest  
 part,  
 Dear land, take my tears.

*June 1865.*

## ENRICA, 1865

SHE came among us from the South,  
 And made the North her home  
 awhile ;  
 Our dimness brightened in her  
 smile,  
 Our tongue grew sweeter in her  
 mouth.

We chilled beside her liberal glow,  
 She dwarfed us by her ampler  
 scale,  
 Her full-blown blossom made us  
 pale—  
 She Summer-like and we like snow.

We Englishwomen, trim, correct,  
 All minted in the selfsame mould,  
 Warm-hearted but of semblance  
 cold,  
 All-courteous out of self-respect.

She, woman in her natural grace,  
 Less trammelled she by lore of  
 school,  
 Courteous by nature not by rule,  
 Warm-hearted and of cordial face.

So for awhile she made her home  
 Among us in the rigid North,  
 She who from Italy came forth  
 And scaled the Alps and crossed the  
 foam.

But, if she found us like our sea,  
Of aspect colourless and chill,  
Rock-girt,—like it she found us  
still

Deep at our deepest, strong and  
free.

1 July 1865.

### HUSBAND AND WIFE

‘OH kiss me once before I go,  
To make amends for sorrow :  
Oh kiss me once before we part,  
For we mayn’t meet to-morrow.

‘And I was wrong to force your  
will,  
And wrong to mar your life :  
But kiss me once before we part  
Because you are my wife.’

She turned her head and tossed her  
head,

And puckered up her brow :  
‘I never kissed you yet,’ said she,  
‘And I’ll not kiss you now.

‘Though I’m your wife by might  
and right  
And forsworn marriage vow,  
I never loved you yet,’ said she,  
‘And I don’t love you now.’

So he went sailing on the sea,  
And she sat crossed and dumb,  
While he went sailing on the sea  
Where the storm-winds come.

He’d been away a month and day  
Counting from morn to morn :  
And many buds had turned to leaves,  
And many lambs been born ;

And many buds had turned  
flowers

For Spring was in a glow,  
When she was laid upon her bed  
As white and cold as snow.

‘Oh let me kiss my baby once,  
Once before I die :  
And bring it sometimes to my grave  
To teach it where I lie.

‘And tell my husband, when I  
comes  
Safe back from sea,  
To love the baby that I leave  
If ever he loved me :

‘And tell him, not for might  
right  
Or forsworn marriage vow,  
But for the helpless baby’s sake,  
I would have kissed him now.’

12 July 1865.

### ITALIA, IO TI SALUTO

To come back from the sweet South  
to the North

Where I was born, bred, look  
die ;

Come back to do my day’s work  
its day,

Play out my play—  
Amen, amen, say I.

To see no more the country half  
own,

Nor hear the half familiar speech  
Amen, I say ; I turn to that ble  
North

Whence I came forth—  
The South lies out of reach.

when our swallows fly back to  
 the South,  
 To the sweet South, to the sweet  
 South,  
 The tears may come again into my  
 eyes

On the old wise,  
 And the sweet name to my mouth.  
*Towards July 1865.*

## WHAT TO DO?

MY love and my own own deary !  
 What shall I do ? my love is weary.  
 Sleep, O friend, on soft downy pillow,  
 Pass, O friend, as wind or as billow,  
 And I'll wear the willow.

A stone at his head be set,  
 A swelling turf be his coverlet,  
 A mound round with a graveyard  
 wattle,  
 Edged round from the trampling  
 cattle  
 And the children's prattle.

A stone myself, instead of a stone,  
 Will sit by him to dwindle and  
 moan ;  
 And weep with a bitter weeping,  
 And weep where my love lies  
 sleeping,  
 While my life goes creeping.

*4 August 1865.*

## A DAUGHTER OF EVE.

A FOOL I was to sleep at noon,  
 And wake when night is chilly  
 Beneath the comfortless cold moon ;  
 A fool to pluck my rose too soon,  
 A fool to snap my my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept ;  
 Faded and all-forsaken,  
 I weep as I have never wept :  
 Oh it was summer when I slept,  
 It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future  
 Spring  
 And sun-warmed sweet to-  
 morrow :—

Stripped bare of hope and every-  
 thing,  
 No more to laugh, no more to  
 sing,  
 I sit alone with sorrow.

*30 September 1865.*

## A DIRGE

WHY were you born when the snow  
 was falling ?  
 You should have come to the  
 cuckoo's calling,  
 Or when grapes are green in the  
 cluster,  
 Or at least when lithe swallows  
 muster  
 For their far off flying  
 From summer dying.

Why did you die when the lambs  
 were cropping ?  
 You should have died at the apples'  
 dropping,  
 When the grasshopper comes to  
 trouble,  
 And the wheat-fields are sodden  
 stubble,  
 And all winds go sighing  
 For sweet things dying.

*21 November 1865.*

## AN 'IMMURATA' SISTER

LIFE flows down to death; we  
cannot bind

That current that it should not  
flee:

Life flows down to death, as rivers  
find

The inevitable sea.

Men work and think, but women  
feel;

And so (for I'm a woman, I)

And so I should be glad to die,

And cease from impotence of zeal,

And cease from hope, and cease  
from dread,

And cease from yearnings with-  
out gain,

And cease from all this world of  
pain,

And be at peace among the dead.

Hearts that die, by death renew  
their youth,

Lightened of this life that doubts  
and dies;

Silent and contented, while the  
Truth

Unveiled makes them wise.

Why should I seek and never find

That something which I have  
not had?

Fair and unutterably sad

The world hath sought time out of  
mind;

The world hath sought and I have  
sought,—

Ah empty world and empty I!

For we have spent our strength for  
nought,

And soon it will be time to die.

Sparks fly upward toward the  
fount of fire,

Kindling, flashing, hovering:—

Kindle, flash, my soul; mount

higher and higher,

Thou whole burnt-offering!

*Circa 1865.*

## ONCE FOR ALL

(MARGARET)

I SAID: This is a beautiful fresh rose

I said: I will delight me with

its scent,

Will watch its lovely curve

languishment,

Will watch its leaves unclothe,

heart unclothe.

I said: Old earth has put away her

snows,

All living things make merry

their bent,

A flower is come for every flower

that went

In autumn, the sun glows, the south

wind blows.

So walking in a garden of delight

I came upon one sheltered

shadowed nook

Where broad leaf shadows veil

the day with night,

And there lay snow unmelted

the sun:—

I answered: Take who will the

path I took,

Winter nips once for all; love

but one.

*8 January 1866.*

## A SMILE AND A SIGH

A SMILE because the nights are short

And every morning brings such

pleasure

And sweet love-making, harmless  
sport :

Love that makes and finds its  
treasure ;

Love, treasure without measure.

I sigh because the days are long !  
Long long these days that pass  
in sighing,

burden saddens every song.

While time lags which should be  
flying,

We live who would be dying.

*February 1866.*

### IN A CERTAIN PLACE

FOUND Love in a certain place  
Deep and cold—or cold and  
dead?—

Ivory-white upon his bed,

All ivory-white his face.

His hands were folded

On his quiet breast,

His figure laid at rest

Chilly bed was moulded.

His hair hung lax about his brow,

Had not seen his face before :

For, if I saw it once, it wore

Another aspect now.

No trace of last night's sorrow,

No shadow of to-morrow :

All at peace (thus all sorrows cease),

All at peace.

I wondered : Were his eyes

Soft or falcon-clear ?

I wondered : As he lies

Does he feel me near ?

In silence my heart spoke

And wondered : If he woke

And found me sitting nigh him

And felt me sitting by him,  
If life flushed to his cheek,  
He living man with men,  
Then if I heard him speak  
Oh should I know him then ?

*6 March 1866.*

### CANNOT SWEETEN

'If that's water you wash your  
hands in,

Why is it black as ink is black ?'

'Because my hands are foul with my  
folly :

Oh the lost time that comes not  
back !'

'If that's water you bathe your feet  
in,

Why is it red as wine is red ?'

'Because my feet sought blood in  
their goings,

Red, red is the track they tread.'

'Slew you mother or slew you father  
That your foulness passeth not  
by ?'

'Not father, and oh not mother :  
I slew my love with an evil eye.'

'Slew you sister or slew you brother  
That in peace you have not a  
part ?'

'Not brother and oh not sister :  
I slew my love with a hardened  
heart.

'He loved me because he loved me,  
Not for grace or beauty I had :  
He loved me because he loved me :  
For his loving me I was glad.

'Yet I loved him not for his loving,  
While I played with his love and  
truth,  
Not loving him for his loving,  
Wasting his joy, wasting his  
youth.

'I ate his life as a banquet,  
I drank his life as new wine,  
I fattened upon his leanness,  
Mine to flourish and his to pine.

'So his life fled as running water,  
So it perished as water spilt :  
If black my hands and my feet as  
scarlet,  
Blacker, redder my heart of guilt.

'Cold as a stone, as hard, as heavy :  
All my sighs ease it no whit,  
All my tears make it no cleaner,  
Dropping, dropping, dropping  
on it.'

8 March 1866.

### OF MY LIFE

I WEARY of my life  
Through the long sultry day,  
While happy creatures play  
Their harmless lives away :—  
What is my life ?

I weary of my life  
Through the slow tedious night,  
While, earth and heaven's delight,  
The moon walks forth in white :—  
What is my life ?

If I might, I would die :  
My soul should flee away  
To day that is not day  
Where sweet souls sing and say—  
If I might die !

If I might, I would die :  
My body out of sight,  
All night that is not night  
My soul should walk in white—  
If I might die !

15 May 1866.

### SONG

OH what comes over the sea,  
Shoals and quicksands past ;  
And what comes home to me,  
Sailing slow, sailing fast ?

A wind comes over the sea  
With a moan in its blast ;  
But nothing comes home to me  
Sailing slow, sailing fast.

Let me be, let me be,  
For my lot is cast :  
Land or sea all's one to me,  
And sail it slow or fast.

11 June 1866.

### FROM METASTASIO

FIRST, last, and dearest,  
My love, mine own,  
Thee best beloved,  
Thee love alone,  
Once and for ever  
So love I thee.

First as a suppliant  
Love makes his moan,  
Then as a monarch  
Sets up his throne :  
Once and for ever—  
So love I thee.

Circa 1868.



## AUTUMN VIOLETS

KEEP love for youth, and violets for  
the spring :  
Or if these bloom when worn-out  
autumn grieves  
Let them lie hid in double shade  
of leaves,  
Their own, and others' dropped  
down withering ;  
Or violets suit when home birds  
build and sing,  
Not when the outbound bird a  
passage cleaves ;  
Not with dry stubble of mown  
harvest sheaves,  
But when the green world buds to  
blossoming.  
Keep violets for the spring, and love  
for youth,  
Love that should dwell with  
beauty, mirth, and hope :  
Or if a later sadder love be  
born,  
Let this not look for grace beyond  
its scope,  
But give itself, nor plead for answer-  
ing truth—  
A grateful Ruth tho' gleaning  
scanty corn.

*Before 1869.*

THEY DESIRE A BETTER  
COUNTRY

## I

WOULD not if I could undo my  
past,  
Tho' for its sake my future is a  
blank ;  
My past for which I have myself  
to thank,

For all its faults and follies first and  
last.

I would not cast anew the lot once  
cast,

Or launch a second ship for one  
that sank,

Or drug with sweets the bitterness  
I drank,

Or break by feasting my perpetual  
fast.

I would not if I could : for much  
more dear

Is one remembrance than a hun-  
dred joys,

More than a thousand hopes  
in jubilee ;

Dearer the music of one tearful  
voice

That unforgotten calls and calls  
to me,

'Follow me here, rise up, and follow  
here.'

## II

What seekest thou, far in the un-  
known land ?

In hope I follow joy gone on  
before ;

In hope and fear persistent more  
and more,

As the dry desert lengthens out its  
sand.

Whilst day and night I carry in my  
hand

The golden key to ope the golden  
door

Of golden home ; yet mine eye  
weepeth sore,

For long the journey is that makes  
no stand.

And who is this that veiled doth  
walk with thee ?

Lo this is Love that walketh at  
my right ;

One exile holds us both, and  
 we are bound  
 To selfsame home-joys in the land  
 of light.  
 Weeping thou walkest with him;  
 weepeth he?—  
 Some sobbing weep, some weep  
 and make no sound.

## III

A dimness of a glory glimmers here  
 Thro' veils and distance from the  
 space remote;  
 A faintest far vibration of a note  
 Reaches to us and seems to bring  
 us near;  
 Causing our face to glow with braver  
 cheer,  
 Making the serried mist to stand  
 afloat,  
 Subduing languor with an anti-  
 dote,  
 And strengthening love almost to  
 cast out fear:  
 Till for one moment golden city walls  
 Rise looming on us, golden walls  
 of home,  
 Light of our eyes until the darkness  
 falls;  
 Then thro' the outer darkness  
 burdensome  
 I hear again the tender voice that  
 calls,  
 'Follow me hither, follow, rise,  
 and come.'

*Before 1870.*

## BY WAY OF REMEMBRANCE

REMEMBER, if I claim too much of  
 you,  
 I claim it of my brother and my  
 friend:

Have patience with me till the  
 hidden end—  
 Bitter or sweet, in mercy shut from  
 view.  
 Pay me my due; though I to pay  
 your due  
 Am all too poor, and past what  
 will can mend:  
 Thus of your bounty you must  
 give and lend,  
 Still unrepaid by aught I look  
 to do.  
 Still unrepaid by aught of mine on  
 earth:  
 But overpaid, please God, when  
 recompense  
 Beyond the mystic Jordan and new  
 birth  
 Is dealt to virtue as to innocence  
 When Angels singing praises in  
 their mirth  
 Have borne you in their arms  
 and fetched you hence.

Will you be there? my yearning  
 heart has cried.  
 Ah me, my love, my love, shall  
 be there,  
 To sit down in your glory and  
 share  
 Your gladness, glowing as a virgin  
 bride?  
 Or will another, dearer, fairer-eyed  
 Sit nigher to you in your jubilee  
 And mindful one of other will you  
 be  
 Borne higher and higher on joy's  
 ebbless tide?  
 Yea, if I love I will not grudge you  
 this:  
 I too shall float upon that heavenly  
 sea  
 And sing my joyful praises with  
 out ache;

Your overflow of joy shall gladden  
me,  
My whole heart shall sing  
praises for your sake,  
And find its own fulfilment in your  
bliss.

In Resurrection is it awfuller  
That rising of the All or of the  
Each—  
Of all kinds of all nations of all  
speech,  
Or one by one of *him* and *him* and  
*her*?

When dust reanimate begins to stir,  
Here, there, beyond, beyond,  
reach beyond reach;  
While every wave disgorges on  
its beach,

Alive or dead-in-life, some seafarer.  
In Resurrection, on the day of days,  
That day of mourning throughout  
all the earth,

In Resurrection may we meet  
again:

No more with stricken hearts  
to part in twain;

As once in sorrow one, now one  
in mirth,

One in our resurrection-songs of  
praise.

I love you and you know it—this at  
least,

This comfort is mine own in all  
my pain:

You know it, and can never doubt  
again,

And love's mere self is a continual  
feast:

Not oath of mine nor blessing-word  
of priest

Could make my love more certain  
or more plain.

R

Life as a rolling moon doth wax  
and wane—

O weary moon, still rounding, still  
decreased!

Life wanes: and when Love folds  
his wings above

Tired joy, and less we feel his  
conscious pulse,

Let us go fall asleep, dear  
Friend, in peace;—

A little while, and age and  
sorrow cease;

A little while, and love reborn  
annuls

Loss and decay and death—and all  
is love.

*Towards October 1870.*

## AN ECHO FROM WILLOW- WOOD

O ye, all ye that walk in willow-wood.

D. G. ROSSETTI.

Two gazed into a pool, he gazed  
and she,

Not hand in hand, yet heart in  
heart, I think,

Pale and reluctant on the water's  
brink,

As on the brink of parting which  
must be.

Each eyed the other's aspect, she  
and he,

Each felt one hungering heart  
leap up and sink,

Each tasted bitterness which both  
must drink,

There on the brink of life's dividing  
sea.

Lilies upon the surface, deep below

Two wistful faces craving each  
for each,

2 C

Resolute and reluctant without  
speech :—

A sudden ripple made the faces flow,  
One moment joined, to vanish out  
of reach :

So those hearts joined, and ah  
were parted so.

*Circa 1870.*

## THE GERMAN-FRENCH CAMPAIGN

1870-1871

These two pieces, written during the  
suspense of a great nation's agony, aim at  
expressing human sympathy, not political  
bias.

### I

THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH

ALL her corn-fields rippled in the  
sunshine,

All her lovely vines, sweets-laden,  
bowed ;

Yet some weeks to harvest and to  
vintage :

When, as one man's hand, a cloud  
Rose and spread, and, blackening,  
burst asunder

In rain and fire and thunder.

Is there nought to reap in the day  
of harvest ?

Hath the vine in her day no fruit  
to yield ?

Yea, men tread the press, but not  
for sweetness,

And they reap a red crop from  
the field.

Build barns, ye reapers, garner all  
aright,

Though your souls be called  
to-night.

A cry of tears goes up from blackened  
homesteads,

A cry of blood goes up from reek-  
ing earth :

Tears and blood have a cry that  
pierces Heaven

Through all its Hallelujah swell  
of mirth ;

God hears their cry, and though He  
tarry, yet

He doth not forget.

Mournful Mother, prone in dust and  
weeping,

Who shall comfort thee for those  
who are not ?

As thou didst, men do to thee ; and  
heap the measure

And heat the furnace sevenfold  
hot :

As thou once, now these to thee—  
who pitieth thee

From sea to sea ?

O thou King, terrible in strength  
and building

Thy strong future on thy past !

Though he drink the last, the King  
of Sheshach,

Yet he shall drink at the last.

Art thou greater than great Babylon  
Which lies overthrown ?

Take heed, ye unwise among the  
people ;

O ye fools, when will ye under-  
stand ?—

He that planted the ear shall not  
hear,

Nor He smite who formed the  
hand ?

'Vengeance is Mine, is Mine,' thus  
saith the Lord :

O Man, put up thy sword.

2

## 'TO-DAY FOR ME'

SHE sitteth still who used to  
dance,  
She weepeth sore and more and  
more :—  
Let us sit with thee weeping sore,  
O fair France.

She trembleth as the days advance  
Who used to be so light of heart :—  
We in thy trembling bear a part,  
Sister France.

Her eyes shine tearful as they  
glance :  
Who shall give back my slaughtered  
sons ?  
Bind up,' she saith, 'my wounded  
ones.'—  
Alas, France !

She struggles in a deathly trance,  
As in a dream her pulses stir,  
She hears the nations calling her,  
'France, France, France !'

Thou people of the lifted lance,  
Forbear her tears, forbear her  
blood ;  
Roll back, roll back, thy whelming  
flood,  
Back from France.

Eye not her loveliness askance,  
Forge not for her a galling chain :  
Leave her at peace to bloom again,  
Vine-clad France.

A time there is for change and  
chance,  
A time for passing of the cup :

And One abides can yet bind up  
Broken France.

A time there is for change and  
chance :  
Who next shall drink the trembling  
cup,  
Wring out its dregs and suck them  
up  
After France ?

*Towards January 1871.*

## VENUS'S LOOKING-GLASS.

I MARKED where lovely Venus and  
her court  
With song and dance and merry  
laugh went by ;  
Weightless, their wingless feet  
seemed made to fly,  
Bound from the ground, and in mid  
air to sport.  
Left far behind I heard the dolphins  
snort,  
Tracking their goddess with a  
wistful eye,  
Around whose head white doves  
rose, wheeling high  
Or low, and cooed after their tender  
sort.  
All this I saw in Spring. Through  
summer heat  
I saw the lovely Queen of Love  
no more.  
But when flushed Autumn  
through the woodlands went  
I spied sweet Venus walk amid the  
wheat :  
Whom seeing, every harvester  
gave o'er  
His toil, and laught and hoped  
and was content.

*October 1872.*

## LOVE LIES BLEEDING

LOVE, that is dead and buried,  
 yesterday  
 Out of his grave rose up before  
 my face ;  
 No recognition in his look, no  
 trace  
 Of memory in his eyes dust-dimmed  
 and grey ;  
 While I, remembering, found no  
 word to say,  
 But felt my quickened heart leap  
 in its place ;  
 Caught afterglow thrown back  
 from long-set days,  
 Caught echoes of all music past away.  
 Was this indeed to meet ?—I mind  
 me yet  
 In youth we met when hope and  
 love were quick,  
 We parted with hope dead but  
 love alive :  
 I mind me how we parted then  
 heart-sick,  
 Remembering, loving, hopeless,  
 weak to strive :—  
 Was this to meet ? Not so, we have  
 not met.

*Circa 1872.*

## DAYS OF VANITY

A DREAM that waketh,  
 Bubble that breaketh,  
 Song whose burden sigheth,  
 A passing breath,  
 Smoke that vanisheth,—  
 Such is life that dieth.

A flower that fadeth,  
 Fruit the tree sheddeth,

Trackless bird that flieth,  
 Summer time brief,—  
 Falling of the leaf,—  
 Such is life that dieth.

A scent exhaling,  
 Snow waters failing,  
 Morning dew that drieth,  
 A windy blast,  
 Lengthening shadows cast,  
 Such is life that dieth.

A scanty measure,  
 Rust-eaten treasure,  
 Spending that nought buyeth,  
 Moth on the wing,  
 Toil unprofiting,—  
 Such is life that dieth.

Morrow by morrow  
 Sorrow breeds sorrow,  
 For this my song sigheth ;  
 From day to night  
 We lapse out of sight.—  
 Such is life that dieth.

*Before 1873.*

## A BIRD SONG

It's a year almost that I have not  
 seen her :  
 Oh last summer green things were  
 greener,  
 Brambles fewer, the blue sky bluer

It's surely summer, for there's  
 swallow :  
 Come one swallow, his mate with  
 follow,  
 The bird-race quicken, and whe  
 and thicken.

Oh happy swallow whose mate will  
follow  
O'er height, o'er hollow! I'd be a  
swallow,  
To build this weather one nest  
together.

*Before 1873.*

### COR MIO

STILL sometimes in my secret heart  
of hearts

I say 'Cor mio' when I remember  
you,

And thus I yield us both one  
tender due,

Welding one whole of two divided  
parts.

Ah Friend, too wise or unwise for  
such arts,

Ah noble Friend, silent and strong  
and true,

Would you have given me roses  
for the rue

For which I bartered roses in love's  
marts?

So late in autumn one forgets the  
spring,

Forgets the summer with its  
opulence,

The callow birds that long have  
found a wing,

The swallows that more lately got  
them hence :

Will anything like spring, will any-  
thing

Like summer, rouse one day the  
slumbering sense?

*Circa 1875.*

### MEETING

SAID good-bye in hope ;  
But, now we meet again,

I have no hope at all  
Of anything but pain,—  
Our parting and our meeting  
Alike in vain.

Hope on through all your life  
Until the end, dear friend :  
Live through your noble life  
Where joy and promise blend—  
I too will live my life  
Until the end.

Long may your vine entwine,  
Long may your fig-tree spread,  
Their paradise of shade  
Above your cherished head :  
My shelter was a gourd,  
And it is dead.

Yet, when out of a grave  
We are gathered home at last,  
Then may we own life spilt  
No good worth holding fast :—  
Death had its bitterness,  
But it is past.

*Circa 1875.*

### A GREEN CORNFIELD

'And singing still dost soar and soaring  
ever singest.'

THE earth was green, the sky was  
blue :

I saw and heard one sunny morn  
A skylark hang between the two,  
A singing speck above the corn ;

A stage below, in gay accord,  
White butterflies danced on the  
wing,  
And still the singing skylark soared,  
And silent sank and soared to  
sing.



The cornfield stretched a tender  
green  
To right and left beside my walks;  
I knew he had a nest unseen  
Somewhere among the million  
stalks.

And as I paused to hear his song  
While swift the sunny moments  
slid,  
Perhaps his mate sat listening long,  
And listened longer than I did.  
*Before 1876.*

### A BRIDE SONG

THROUGH the vales to my love!  
To the happy small nest of home  
Green from basement to roof;  
Where the honey-bees come  
To the window-sill flowers,  
And dive from above,  
Safe from the spider that weaves  
Her warp and her woof  
In some outermost leaves.

Through the vales to my love!  
In sweet April hours  
All rainbows and showers,  
While dove answers dove,—  
In beautiful May,  
When the orchards are tender  
And frothing with flowers,—  
In opulent June  
When the wheat stands up slender  
By sweet-smelling hay,  
And half the sun's splendour  
Descends to the moon.

Through the vales to my love!  
Where the turf is so soft to the feet  
And the thyme makes it sweet,  
And the stately foxglove  
Hangs silent its exquisite bells;

And where water wells  
The greenness grows greener,  
And bulrushes stand  
Round a lily to screen her.

Nevertheless, if this land,  
Like a garden to smell and to sight,  
Were turned to a desert of sand;  
Stripped bare of delight,  
All its best gone to worst,  
For my feet no repose,  
No water to comfort my thirst,  
And heaven like a furnace above,—  
The desert would be  
As gushing of waters to me,  
The wilderness be as a rose,  
If it led me to thee,  
O my love.

*Before 1876.*

### CONFLUENTS

As rivers seek the sea,  
Much more deep than they,  
So my soul seeks thee  
Far away;  
As running rivers moan  
On their course alone,  
So I moan  
Left alone.

As the delicate rose  
To the sun's sweet strength  
Doth herself uncloze,  
Breadth and length;  
So spreads my heart to thee  
Unveiled utterly,  
I to thee  
Utterly.

As morning dew exhales  
Sunwards pure and free

So my spirit fails  
 After thee.  
 As dew leaves not a trace  
 On the green earth's face ;  
 I, no trace  
 On thy face.

Its goal the river knows,  
 Dewdrops find a way,  
 Sunlight cheers the rose  
 In her day :  
 Shall I, lone sorrow past,  
 Find thee at the last ?  
 Sorrow past,  
 Thee at last ?

*Before 1876.*

### BIRD RAPTURES

THE sunrise wakes the lark to sing,  
 The moonrise wakes the nightin-  
 gale.  
 Come darkness, moonrise, every-  
 thing  
 That is so silent, sweet, and pale,  
 Come, so ye wake the nightingale.

Make haste to mount, thou wistful  
 moon,  
 Make haste to wake the nightin-  
 gale :  
 Let silence set the world in tune  
 To hearken to that wordless tale  
 Which warbles from the nightin-  
 gale.

O herald skylark, stay thy flight  
 One moment, for a nightingale  
 Floods us with sorrow and delight.  
 To-morrow thou shalt hoist the  
 sail ;  
 Leave us to-night the nightingale.

*Before 1876.*

### VALENTINES TO MY MOTHER

1876

FAIRER than younger beauties, more  
 beloved  
 Than many a wife,  
 By stress of Time's vicissitudes un-  
 moved  
 From settled calm of life ;

Endearing rectitude to those who  
 watch  
 The verdict of your face,  
 Raising and making gracious those  
 who catch  
 A semblance of your grace :

With kindly lips of welcome, and  
 with pleased  
 Propitious eyes benign,  
 Accept a kiss of homage from your  
 least  
 Last Valentine.

1877

OWN Mother dear,  
 We all rejoicing here  
 Wait for each other,  
 Daughter for Mother,  
 Sister for Brother,  
 Till each dear face appear  
 Transfigured by Love's flame  
 Yet still the same,—  
 The same yet new,—  
 My face to you,  
 Your face to me,  
 Made lovelier by Love's flame  
 But still the same ;  
 Most dear to see  
 In halo of Love's flame,  
 Because the same.

C. G. for M. F. R.

1878

BLESSED Dear and Heart's Delight,  
 Companion, Friend, and Mother  
 mine,  
 Round whom my fears and love  
 entwine,—  
 With whom I hope to stand  
 and sing  
 Where angels form the outer  
 ring  
 Round singing Saints who, clad in  
 white,  
 Know no more of day or night  
 Or death or any changeful thing,  
 Or anything that is not love,  
 Human love and Love Divine,—  
 Bid me to that tryst above,  
 Bless your Valentine.

1879

MOTHER mine,  
 Whom every year  
 Doth endear,—  
 Before sweet Spring  
 (That sweetest thing  
 Brimfull of bliss)  
 Sets all the throng  
 Of birds a-wooing,  
 Billing and cooing,—  
 Your Valentine  
 Sings you a song,  
 Gives you a kiss.

1880

MORE shower than shine  
 Brings sweet St. Valentine ;  
 Warm shine, warm shower,  
 Bring up sweet flower on flower.  
 Through shower and shine  
 Loves you your Valentine,  
 Through shine, through shower,  
 Through summer's flush, through  
 autumn's fading hour.

1881

Too cold almost for hope of Spring  
 Or firstfruits from the realm of  
 flowers,  
 Your dauntless Valentine, I bring  
 One sprig of love, and sing  
 'Love has no Winter hours.'

If even in this world love is love  
 (This wintry world which felt the  
 Fall),  
 What must it be in heaven above  
 Where love to great and small  
 Is all in all ?

1882

MY blessed Mother dozing in her  
 chair  
 On Christmas Day seemed an  
 embodied Love,  
 A comfortable Love with soft brown  
 hair  
 Softened and silvered to a tint  
 of dove ;  
 A better sort of Venus with an  
 air  
 Angelical from thoughts that dwell  
 above ;  
 A wiser Pallas in whose body fair  
 Enshrined a blessed soul looks  
 out thereof.  
 Winter brought holly then ; now  
 Spring has brought  
 Paler and frailer snowdrops  
 shivering ;  
 And I have brought a simple humble  
 thought—  
 I her devoted duteous Valentine—  
 A lifelong thought which thrills  
 this song I sing,  
 A lifelong love to this dear Saint of  
 mine.

1883

A WORLD of change and loss, a  
world of death,  
Of heart and eyes that fail, of  
labouring breath,  
Of pains to bear and painful deeds  
to do :—  
Nevertheless a world of life to come  
and love ; where you're at home,  
while in our home  
Your Valentine rejoices, having you.

1884

ANOTHER year of joy and grief,  
Another year of hope and fear :  
Mother, is life long or brief ?  
We hasten while we linger here.  
But, since we linger, love me still  
And bless me still, O Mother mine,  
While hand in hand we scale life's  
hill,  
You guide, and I your Valentine.

1885

ALL the Robin Redbreasts  
Have lived the winter through,  
Nenny Wrens have pecked their fill  
And found a work to do ;  
Families of Sparrows  
Have weathered wind and  
storm  
With Rabbit on the stony hill  
And Hare upon her form.  
You and I, my Mother,  
Have lived the winter through,  
and still we play our daily parts  
And still find work to do :  
And still the cornfields flourish,  
The olive and the vine,  
and still you reign my Queen of  
Hearts  
And I'm your Valentine.

1886

WINTER'S latest snowflake is the  
snowdrop flower,  
Yellow crocus kindles the first  
flame of the Spring,  
At that time appointed, at that day  
and hour,  
When life reawakens and hope  
in everything.

Such a tender snowflake in the  
wintry weather,  
Such a feeble flamelet for chilled  
St. Valentine,—  
But blest be any weather which  
finds us still together,  
My pleasure and my treasure, O  
blessed Mother mine.

## MIRRORS OF LIFE AND DEATH

THE mystery of Life, the mystery  
Of Death, I see  
Darkly as in a glass ;  
Their shadows pass,  
And talk with me.

As the flush of a Morning Sky,  
As a Morning Sky colourless—  
Each yields its measure of light  
To a wet world or a dry ;  
Each fares through day to night  
With equal pace,  
And then each one  
Is done.

As the Sun with glory and grace  
In his face,  
Benignantly hot,  
Graciously radiant and keen,  
Ready to rise and to run,—  
Not without spot,  
Not even the Sun.

As the Moon  
On the wax, on the wane,  
With night for her noon ;  
Vanishing soon,  
To appear again.

As Roses that droop  
Half warm, half chill, in the languid  
    May,  
And breathe out a scent  
Sweet and faint ;  
Till the wind gives one swoop  
To scatter their beauty away.

As Lilies a multitude,  
One dipping, one rising, one sinking,  
On rippling waters, clear blue  
And pure for their drinking ;  
One new dead, and one opened anew,  
And all good.

As a cankered pale Flower,  
With death for a dower,  
Each hour of its life half dead ;  
With death for a crown  
Weighing down  
Its head.

As an Eagle, half strength and half  
    grace,  
Most potent to face  
Unwinking the splendour of light ;  
Harrying the East and the West,  
Soaring aloft from our sight ;  
Yet one day or one night dropped  
    to rest  
On the low common earth  
Of his birth.

As a Dove,  
Not alone,  
In a world of her own  
Full of fluttering soft noises  
And tender sweet voices  
Of love.

As a Mouse  
Keeping house  
In the fork of a tree,  
With nuts in a crevice,  
And an acorn or two ;  
What cares he  
For blossoming boughs,  
Or the song-singing bevvies  
Of birds in their glee,  
Scarlet, or golden, or blue ?

As a Mole grubbing underground ;  
When it comes to the light  
It grubs its way back again,  
Feeling no bias of fur  
To hamper it in its stir,  
Scant of pleasure and pain,  
Sinking itself out of sight  
Without sound.

As Waters that drop and drop,  
Weariness without end,  
That drop and never stop,  
Wear that nothing can mend,  
Till one day they drop—  
Stop—  
And there's an end,  
And matters mend.

As Trees, beneath whose skin  
We mark not the sap begin  
To swell and rise,  
Till the whole bursts out in green  
We mark the falling leaves  
When the wide world grieves  
And sighs.

As a Forest on fire,  
Where maddened creatures desire  
Wet mud or wings  
Beyond all those things  
Which could assuage desire  
On this side the flaming fire.

As Wind with a sob and sigh  
To which there comes no reply

But a rustle and shiver  
 From rushes of the river ;  
 As Wind with a desolate moan,  
 Moaning on alone.  
 As a Desert all sand,  
 Blank, neither water nor land  
 For solace or dwelling or culture,  
 Where the storms and the wild  
     creatures howl ;  
 Given over to lion and vulture,  
 To ostrich and jackal and owl :  
 Yet somewhere an oasis lies ;  
 Where waters arise  
 To nourish one seedling of balm  
 Perhaps, or one palm.

As the Sea,  
 Murmuring, shifting, swaying ;  
 One time sunnily playing,  
 One time wrecking and slaying ;  
 Whichever mood it be,  
 Worst or best,  
 Never at rest.

As still Waters and deep,  
 As shallow Waters that brawl,  
 As rapid Waters that leap  
 To their fall.

As Music, as Colour, as Shape,  
 Days of rapture and pain  
 Turning in vain  
 To a lock which turns not again,  
 While breaths and moments escape.

As Spring, all bloom and desire ;  
 As Summer, all gift and fire ;  
 As Autumn, a dying glow ;  
 As Winter, with nought to show :

Winter which lays its dead all out  
     of sight,  
 And clothed in white,  
 And waiting for the long-awaited light.

*Before 1878.*

## AN OCTOBER GARDEN

IN my Autumn garden I was fain  
 To mourn among my scattered  
     roses ;  
 Alas for that last rosebud which  
     uncloses  
 To Autumn's languid sun and rain  
 When all the world is on the wane !  
 Which has not felt the sweet  
     constraint of June,  
 Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden  
     walk,  
 You are but coarse compared with  
     roses :  
 More choice, more dear that rose-  
     bud which uncloses,  
 Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,  
 That least and last which cold winds  
     balk ;  
 A rose it is though least and last  
     of all,  
 A rose to me though at the fall.

*Before 1878.*

## FREAKS OF FASHION

SUCH a hubbub in the nests,  
     Such a bustle and squeak !  
 Nestlings, guiltless of a feather,  
     Learning just to speak,  
 Ask—' And how about the fashions ?'  
     From a cavernous beak.

Perched on bushes, perched on  
     hedges,  
 Perched on firm hahas,  
 Perched on anything that holds them,  
     Gay papas and grave mammas  
 Teach the knowledge-thirsty nest-  
     lings :  
 Hear the gay papas.



Robin says : 'A scarlet waistcoat  
Will be all the wear,  
Snug, and also cheerful-looking  
For the frostiest air,  
Comfortable for the chest too  
When one comes to plume and  
pair.'

'Neat grey hoods will be in vogue,'  
Quoth a Jackdaw : 'glossy grey,  
Setting close, yet setting easy,  
Nothing fly-away ;  
Suited to our misty mornings,  
*À la négligée.*'

Flushing salmon, flushing sulphur,  
Haughty Cockatoos  
Answer—'Hoods may do for morn-  
ings,  
But for evenings choose  
High head-dresses, curved like  
crescents  
Such as well-bred persons use.'

'Top-knots, yes ; yet more essential  
Still, a train or tail,'  
Screamed the Peacock : 'gemmed  
and lustrous,  
Not too stiff, and not too frail ;  
Those are best which rearrange as  
Fans, and spread or trail.'

Spoke the Swan, entrenched behind  
An inimitable neck :  
'After all, there's nothing sweeter  
For the lawn or lake  
Than simple white, if fine and flaky  
And absolutely free from speck.'

'Yellow,' hinted a Canary,  
'Warmer, not less *distingué.*'  
'Peach colour,' put in a Lory,  
'Cannot look *outré.*'  
'All the colours are in fashion,  
And are right,' the Parrots say.

'Very well. But do contrast  
Tints harmonious,'  
Piped a Blackbird, justly proud  
Of bill aurigerous ;  
'Half the world may learn a lesson  
As to that from us.'

Then a Stork took up the word :  
'Aim at height and *chic* :  
Not high heels, they're common  
somehow,  
Stilted legs, not thick,  
Nor yet thin : ' he just glanced  
downward  
And snapped to his beak.

Here a rustling and a whirring,  
As of fans outspread,  
Hinted that mammas felt anxious  
Lest the next thing said  
Might prove less than quite judicious  
Or even underbred.

So a mother Auk resumed  
The broken thread of speech :  
'Let colours sort themselves, m  
dears,  
Yellow, or red, or peach ;  
The main points, as it seems to m  
We mothers have to teach,

'Are form and texture, elegance,  
An air reserved, sublime ;  
The mode of wearing what we we  
With due regard to month and  
clime.

But now, let's all compose ourselves  
It's almost breakfast-time.'

A hubbub, a squeak, a bustle !  
Who cares to chatter or sing  
With delightful breakfast coming ?  
Yet they whisper under the wing  
'So we may wear whatever we like  
Anything, everything !'

*Circa 1878.*



## YET A LITTLE WHILE

DREAMED and did not seek : to-day I seek

Who can no longer dream ;  
But now am all behindhand, waxen weak,

And dazed amid so many things  
that gleam

Yet are not what they seem.

dreamed and did not work : to-day  
I work,

Kept wide awake by care  
and loss, and perils dimly guessed  
to lurk ;

I work and reap not, while my  
life goes bare

And void in wintry air.

hope indeed ; but hope itself is fear

Viewed on the sunny side ;

hope, and disregard the world  
that's here,

The prizes drawn, the sweet things  
that betide ;

I hope, and I abide.

*Before 1879.*

## PARTED

HAD Fortune parted us,  
Fortune is blind ;

Had Anger parted us,  
Anger unkind—

But since God parts us  
Let us part humbly,

Bearing our burden  
Bravely and dumbly.

And since there is but one  
Heaven, not another,  
Let us not close that door  
Against each other.

God's Love is higher than mine,  
Christ's tenfold proved,  
Yet even I would die  
For thee, Beloved.

*Circa 1880.*

## TO-DAY'S BURDEN

'ARISE, depart, for this is not your  
rest.'—

Oh burden of all burdens, still to  
arise

And still depart nor rest in any  
wise !

Rolling, still rolling thus from East  
to West,

Earth journeys on her immemorial  
quest,

Whom a moon chases in no  
different guise.

Thus stars pursue their courses,  
and thus flies

The sun, and thus all creatures  
manifest

Unrest the common heritage, the ban  
Flung broadcast to all humankind,

on all

Who live—for, living, all are  
bound to die.

That which is old, we know that it  
is man.

These have no rest who sit and  
dream and sigh,

Nor have those rest who wrestle  
and who fall.

*Circa 1881.*

## THE KEY-NOTE

WHERE are the songs I used to  
know,

Where are the notes I used to  
sing ?

I have forgotten everything  
 I used to know so long ago ;  
 Summer has followed after Spring ;  
 Now Autumn is so shrunk and sere  
 I scarcely think a sadder thing  
 Can be the Winter of my year.

Yet Robin sings through Winter's  
 rest,  
 When bushes put their berries on ;  
 While they their ruddy jewels don,  
 He sings out of a ruddy breast ;  
 The hips and haws and ruddy breast  
 Make one spot warm where snow-  
 flakes lie ;  
 They break and cheer the unlovely  
 rest  
 Of Winter's pause—and why not  
 I ?

*Before 1882.*

#### HE AND SHE

'SHOULD one of us remember,  
 And one of us forget,  
 I wish I knew what each will do,  
 But who can tell as yet ?'

'Should one of us remember,  
 And one of us forget,  
 I promise you what I will do—  
 And I'm content to wait for you,  
 And not be sure as yet.'

*Before 1882.*

#### 'LUSCIOUS AND SORROW- FUL'

BEAUTIFUL, tender, wasting away  
 for sorrow ;  
 Thus to-day ; and how shall it be  
 with thee to-morrow ?  
 Beautiful, tender—what else ?  
 A hope tells,

Beautiful, tender, keeping the jubilee  
 In the land of home together, pa-  
 death and sea ;  
 No more change or death, r-  
 more  
 Salt sea-shore.

*Before 1882.*

#### DE PROFUNDIS

OH why is heaven built so far,  
 Oh why is earth set so remote ?  
 I cannot reach the nearest star  
 That hangs afloat.

I would not care to reach the moon  
 One round monotonous of change  
 Yet even she repeats her tune  
 Beyond my range.

I never watch the scattered fire  
 Of stars, or sun's far-trailing trail  
 But all my heart is one desire,  
 And all in vain :

For I am bound with fleshly bands  
 Joy, beauty, lie beyond my scope  
 I strain my heart, I stretch my hand  
 And catch at hope.

*Before 1882.*

#### TEMPUS FUGIT

LOVELY Spring,  
 A brief sweet thing,  
 Is swift on the wing ;  
 Gracious Summer,  
 A slow sweet comer,  
 Hastens past ;  
 Autumn while sweet  
 Is all incomplete  
 With a moaning blast.  
 Nothing can last,

Can be cleaved unto,  
 Can be dwelt upon.  
 It is hurried through,  
 It is come and gone,  
 Undone it cannot be done ;  
 It is ever to do,  
 Ever old, ever new,  
 Ever waxing old  
 And lapsing to Winter cold.

*Before 1882.*

### GOLDEN GLORIES

HE buttercup is like a golden cup,  
 The marigold is like a golden frill,  
 The daisy with a golden eye looks  
 up,  
 And golden spreads the flag beside  
 the rill,  
 And gay and golden nods the  
 daffodil ;  
 The gorse yellow common swells a golden  
 sea,  
 The cowslip hangs a head of  
 golden tips,  
 And golden drips the honey which  
 the bee  
 Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers  
 and stores and sips.

*Before 1882.*

### JOHNNY

FOUNDED ON AN ANECDOTE OF  
 THE FIRST FRENCH REVOLUTION

JOHNNY had a golden head  
 Like a golden mop in blow,  
 Right and left his curls would spread  
 In a glory and a glow,  
 And they framed his honest face  
 Like stray sunbeams out of place.

Long and thick, they half could hide  
 How threadbare his patched jacket  
 hung ;  
 They used to be his Mother's pride ;  
 She praised them with a tender  
 tongue,  
 And stroked them with a loving  
 finger  
 That smoothed and stroked and  
 loved to linger.

On a doorstep Johnny sat,  
 Up and down the street looked he ;  
 Johnny did not own a hat,  
 Hot or cold tho' days might be ;  
 Johnny did not own a boot  
 To cover up his muddy foot.

Johnny's face was pale and thin,  
 Pale with hunger and with crying ;  
 For his Mother lay within,  
 Talked and tossed and seemed a-  
 dying,  
 While Johnny racked his brains to  
 think  
 How to get her help and drink,

Get her physic, get her tea,  
 Get her bread and something  
 nice ;  
 Not a penny piece had he,  
 And scarce a shilling might suffice ;  
 No wonder that his soul was sad,  
 When not one penny piece he had.

As he sat there thinking, moping,  
 Because his Mother's wants were  
 many,  
 Wishing much but scarcely hoping  
 To earn a shilling or a penny,  
 A friendly neighbour passed him by,  
 And questioned him, why did he cry.

Alas his trouble soon was told :

He did not cry for cold or hunger,  
Though he was hungry both and  
cold ;

He only felt more weak and  
younger,  
Because he wished so to be old  
And apt at earning pence or gold.

Kindly that neighbour was, but poor,  
Scant coin had he to give or  
lend ;  
And well he guessed there needed  
more

Than pence or shillings to befriend  
The helpless woman in her strait,  
So much loved, yet so desolate.

One way he saw, and only one :  
He would—he could—not give  
the advice,  
And yet he must : the widow's son  
Had curls of gold would fetch their  
price ;  
Long curls which might be clipped,  
and sold  
For silver, or perhaps for gold.

Our Johnny, when he understood  
Which shop it was that purchased  
hair,  
Ran off as briskly as he could,  
And in a trice stood cropped and  
bare,  
Too short of hair to fill a locket,  
But jingling money in his pocket.

Precious money—tea and bread,  
Physic, ease, for Mother dear,  
Better than a golden head :  
Yet our hero dropped one tear  
When he spied himself close shorn,  
Barer much than lamb new-born.

His Mother throve upon the money  
Ate and revived and kissed her  
son :

But oh when she perceived her  
Johnny,  
And understood what he had done  
All and only for her sake,  
She sobbed as if her heart must  
break.

*Before 1882.*

## 'HOLLOW-SOUNDING AND MYSTERIOUS'

THERE'S no replying  
To the Wind's sighing ;  
Telling, foretelling,  
Dying, undying,  
Dwindling and swelling,  
Complaining, droning,  
Whistling and moaning,  
Ever beginning,  
Ending, repeating,  
Hinting and dinning,  
Lagging and fleeting;—  
We've no replying  
Living or dying  
To the Wind's sighing.

What are you telling,  
Variable Wind-tone ?  
What would be teaching,  
O sinking, swelling,  
Desolate Wind-moan ?  
Ever for ever  
Teaching and preaching,  
Never, ah never  
Making us wiser.  
The earliest riser  
Catches no meaning,  
The last who hearkens  
Garners no gleanings  
Of wisdom's treasure,  
While the world darkens.

Living or dying,  
In pain, in pleasure,  
We've no replying  
To wordless, flying  
Wind's sighing.

*Before 1882.*

MAIDEN MAY

MAIDEN May sat in her bower,  
In her blush-rose bower in flower,  
Sweet of scent ;  
Sat and dreamed away an hour,  
Half content, half discontent.

Why should rose blossoms be born,  
Tender blossoms, on a thorn,  
Though so sweet ?  
Never a thorn besets the corn,  
Scentless, in its strength complete.

Why are roses all so frail,  
At the mercy of a gale,  
Of a breath ?  
Yet so sweet and perfect pale,  
Still so sweet in life and death.'

Maiden May sat in her bower,  
In her blush-rose bower in flower,  
Where a linnet  
Made one bristling branch the tower  
For her nest and young ones in it.

Gay and clear the linnet trills ;  
Yet the skylark, only, thrills  
Heaven and earth,  
When he breasts the height, and fills  
Height and depth with song and  
mirth.

Nightingales which yield to night  
Solitary strange delight  
Reign alone :  
But the lark for all his height  
Fills no solitary throne.

'While he sings, a hundred sing ;  
Wing their flight, below his wing,  
Yet in flight ;  
Each a lovely joyful thing  
To the measure of its delight.

'Why then should a lark be reckoned  
One alone, without a second  
Near his throne ?  
He in skyward flight unslackened,  
In his music, not alone.'

Maiden May sat in her bower ;  
Her own face was like a flower  
Of the prime,  
Half in sunshine, half in shower,  
In the year's most tender time.

Her own thoughts in silent song  
Musically flowed along,  
Wise, unwise,  
Wistful, wondering, weak or strong :  
As brook shallows sink or rise.

Other thoughts another day,  
Maiden May, will surge and sway  
Round your heart ;  
Wake, and plead, and turn at bay,  
Wisdom part, and folly part.

Time not far remote will borrow  
Other joys, another sorrow,  
All for you ;  
Not to-day, and yet to-morrow  
Reasoning false and reasoning  
true.

Wherefore greatest ? Wherefore  
least ?  
Hearts that starve and hearts that  
feast ?  
You and I ?  
Stammering Oracles have ceased,  
And the whole earth stands at  
'why ?'

Underneath all things that be  
Lies an unsolved mystery ;  
Over all  
Spreads a veil impenetrably,  
Spreads a dense unlifted pall.

Mystery of mysteries ;  
*This* creation hears and sees  
High and low :  
Vanity of vanities ;  
*This* we test and *this* we know.

Maiden May, the days of flowering  
Nurse you now in sweet embowering,  
Sunny days ;  
Bright with rainbows all the  
showering,  
Bright with blossoms all the ways.

Close the inlet of your bower,  
Close it close with thorn and flower,  
Maiden May ;  
Lengthen out the shortening hour,—  
Morrrows are not as to-day.

Stay to-day which wanes too soon,  
Stay the sun and stay the moon,  
Stay your youth ;  
Bask you in the actual noon,  
Rest you in the present truth.

Let to-day suffice to-day :  
For itself to-morrow may  
Fetch its loss,  
Aim and stumble, say its say,  
Watch and pray and bear its cross.  
*Before 1882.*

### TILL TO-MORROW

LONG have I longed, till I am tired  
Of longing and desire ;  
Farewell my points in vain desired,

My dying fire ;  
Farewell all things that die and fade  
and tire.

Springtide and youth and useless  
pleasure  
And all my useless scheming,  
My hopes of unattainable treasure,  
Dreams not worth dreaming,  
Glow-worms that gleam but yield no  
warmth in gleaming,—

Farewell all shows that fade in  
showing :  
My wish and joy stand over  
Until to-morrow ; Heaven is glowing  
Through cloudy cover ;  
Beyond all clouds loves me my  
Heavenly Lover.

*Before 1882.*

### DEATH-WATCHES

THE Spring spreads one green la-  
of flowers  
Which Autumn buries at the fall  
No chilling showers of Autumn  
hours  
Can stay them or recall ;  
Winds sing a dirge, while earth lays  
out of sight  
Her garment of delight.

The cloven East brings forth the sun  
The cloven West doth bury him  
What time his gorgeous race is run  
And all the world grows dim ;  
A funeral moon is lit in heaven  
hollow,  
And pale the star-lights follow.

*Before 1882.*

## TOUCHING 'NEVER'

BECAUSE you never yet have loved  
me, dear,  
Think you you never can nor  
ever will?  
Surely while life remains hope  
lingers still,  
Hope the last blossom of life's dying  
year.  
Because the season and mine age  
grow sere,  
Shall never Spring bring forth  
her daffodil,  
Shall never sweeter Summer feast  
her fill  
Of roses with the nightingales they  
hear?  
If you had loved me, I not loving  
you,  
If you had urged me with the  
tender plea  
Of what our unknown years to come  
might do  
Eternal years, if Time should count  
too few),  
I would have owned the point  
you pressed on me  
Was possible, or probable, or true.

*Before 1882.*

## BRANDONS BOTH.

A fair Milly Brandon, a young  
maid, a fair maid!  
All her curls are yellow and her  
eyes are blue,  
And her cheeks were rosy red till a  
secret care made  
Hollow whiteness of their bright-  
ness as a care will do.

Still she tends her flowers, but not  
as in the old days,  
Still she sings her songs, but not  
the songs of old:  
If now it be high Summer her days  
seem brief and cold days,  
If now it be high Summer her  
nights are long and cold.

If you have a secret, keep it, pure  
maid Milly;  
Life is filled with troubles and the  
world with scorn;  
And pity without love is at best  
times hard and chilly,  
Chilling sore and stinging sore a  
heart forlorn.

Walter Brandon, do you guess Milly  
Brandon's secret?

Many things you know, but not  
everything,  
With your locks like raven's plumage,  
and eyes like an egret,  
And a laugh that is music, and  
such a voice to sing.

Nelly Knollys, she is fair, but she is  
not fairer

Than fairest Milly Brandon was  
before she turned so pale:  
Oh but Nelly's dearer if she be not  
rarer,  
She need not keep a secret or  
blush behind a veil.

Beyond the first green hills, beyond  
the nearest valleys,  
Nelly dwells at home beneath her  
mother's eyes:  
Her home is neat and homely, not  
a cot and not a palace,  
Just the home where love sets up  
his happiest memories.



Milly has no mother; and sad  
beyond another

Is she whose blessed mother is  
vanished out of call :

Truly comfort beyond comfort is  
stored up in a mother

Who bears with all, and hopes  
through all, and loves us all.

Where peacocks nod and flaunt up  
and down the terrace,

Furling and unfurling their scores  
of sightless eyes,

To and fro among the leaves and  
buds and flowers and berries

Maiden Milly strolls and pauses,  
smiles and sighs.

On the hedged-in terrace of her  
father's palace

She may stroll and muse alone,  
may smile or sigh alone,

Letting thoughts and eyes go wander-  
ing over hills and valleys

To-day her father's, and one day  
to be all her own.

If her thoughts go coursing down  
lowlands and up highlands,

It is because the startled game  
are leaping from their lair ;

If her thoughts dart homeward to  
the reedy river islands,

It is because the waterfowl rise  
startled here or there.

At length a footfall on the steps :  
she turns, composed and  
steady,

All the long-descended greatness  
of her father's house

Lifting up her head ; and there  
stands Walter keen and ready

For hunting or for hawking, a  
flush upon his brows.

' Good-morrow, fair cousin.' ' Good-  
morrow, fairest cousin :

The sun has started on his course,  
and I must start to-day :

If you have done me one good turn,  
you've done me many a dozen,

And I shall often think of you,  
think of you away.'

' Over hill and hollow what quarry  
will you follow,

Or what fish will you angle for  
beside the river's edge ?

There's cloud upon the hill-top and  
there's mist deep down the  
hollow,

And fog among the rushes and  
the rustling sedge.'

' I shall speed well enough be it  
hunting or hawking,

Or casting a bait toward the  
shyest daintiest fin.

But I kiss your hands, my cousin  
I must not loiter talking,

For nothing comes of nothing  
and I'm fain to seek and win.'

' Here's a thorny rose : will you  
wear it an hour,

Till the petals drop apart sti-  
fresh and pink and sweet ?

Till the petals drop from the droop-  
ing perished flower,

And only the graceless thorns are  
left of it.'

' Nay, I have another rose sprung  
in another garden,

Another rose which sweetens a-  
the world for me.

Be you a tenderer mistress and be  
you a wariar warden

Of your rose, as sweet as mine  
and full as fair to see.'

Nay, a bud once plucked there is  
no reviving,  
Nor is it worth your wearing now,  
nor worth indeed my own ;  
The dead to the dead, and the  
living to the living.  
It's time I go within, for it's time  
now you were gone.'

Good-bye, Milly Brandon, I shall  
not forget you,  
Though it be good-bye between  
us for ever from to-day ;  
could almost wish to-day that I  
had never met you,  
And I'm true to you in this one  
word that I say.'

Good-bye, Walter. I can guess  
which thornless rose you covet ;  
Long may it bloom and prolong  
its sunny morn :  
et as for my one thorny rose, I do  
not cease to love it,  
And if it is no more a flower I  
love it as a thorn.'

*Before 1882.*

### A LIFE'S PARALLELS

NEVER on this side of the grave  
again,  
On this side of the river,  
On this side of the garner of the  
grain,  
Never.

ver while time flows on and on and  
on,  
That narrow noiseless river,  
ver while corn bows heavy-headed,  
wan,  
Ever.

Never despairing, often fainting,  
rueing,  
But looking back, ah never !  
Faint yet pursuing, faint yet still  
pursuing  
Ever.

*Before 1882.*

### AT LAST

MANY have sung of love a root of  
bane :

While to my mind a root of balm  
it is,

For love at length breeds love ;  
sufficient bliss

For life and death and rising up  
again.

Surely when light of Heaven makes  
all things plain,

Love will grow plain with all its  
mysteries ;

Nor shall we need to fetch from  
over seas

Wisdom or wealth or pleasure safe  
from pain.

Love in our borders, love within our  
heart,

Love all in all, we then shall bide  
at rest,

Ended for ever life's unending  
quest,

Ended for ever effort, change,  
and fear :

Love all in all ;—no more that better  
part

Purchased, but at the cost of  
all things here.

*Before 1882.*

## GOLDEN SILENCES

THERE is silence that saith 'Ah me!'  
 There is silence that nothing saith;  
 One the silence of life forlorn,  
 One the silence of death;  
 One is, and the other shall be.

One we know and have known for  
 long,  
 One we know not, but we shall  
 know,  
 All we who have ever been  
 born;  
 Even so, be it so,—  
 There is silence, despite a song.

Sowing day is a silent day,  
 Resting night is a silent night;  
 But whoso reaps the ripened  
 corn  
 Shall shout in his delight,  
 While silences vanish away.  
*Before 1882.*

## IN THE WILLOW SHADE

I SAT beneath a willow tree,  
 Where water falls and calls;  
 While fancies upon fancies solaced  
 me,  
 Some true, and some were false.

Who set their heart upon a hope  
 That never comes to pass  
 Droop in the end like fading helio-  
 trope,  
 The sun's wan looking-glass.

Who set their will upon a whim  
 Clung to through good and ill  
 Are wrecked alike whether they sink  
 or swim,  
 Or hit or miss their will.

All things are vain that wax and  
 wane,  
 For which we waste our breath;  
 Love only doth not wane and is not  
 vain,  
 Love only outlives death.

A singing lark rose toward the sky,  
 Circling he sang amain;  
 He sang, a speck scarce visible sky-  
 high,  
 And then he sank again.

A second like a sunlit spark  
 Flashed singing up his track;  
 But never overtook that foremost  
 lark,  
 And songless fluttered back.

A hovering melody of birds  
 Haunted the air above;  
 They clearly sang contentment with-  
 out words,  
 And youth and joy and love.

O silvery weeping willow tree  
 With all leaves shivering,  
 Have you no purpose but to shadow  
 me  
 Beside this rippled spring?

On this first fleeting day of Spring  
 For Winter is gone by,  
 And every bird on every quivering  
 wing  
 Floats in a sunny sky;

On this first Summer-like soft day,  
 While sunshine steeps the air,  
 And every cloud has gat itse-  
 away,  
 And birds sing everywhere.

Have you no purpose in the world  
 But thus to shadow me  
 With all your tender drooping twigs  
 unfurled,  
 O weeping willow tree ?

With all your tremulous leaves out-  
 spread  
 Betwixt me and the sun,  
 While here I loiter on a mossy bed  
 With half my work undone ;

My work undone, that should be  
 done  
 At once with all my might ;  
 For after the long day and lingering  
 sun  
 Comes the unworking night.

This day is lapsing on its way,  
 Is lapsing out of sight ;  
 And after all the chances of the day  
 Comes the resourceless night.

The weeping willow shook its head  
 And stretched its shadow long ;  
 The west grew crimson, the sun  
 smouldered red,  
 The birds forbore a song.

Slow wind sighed through the willow  
 leaves,  
 The ripple made a moan,  
 The world drooped murmuring like  
 a thing that grieves ;  
 And then I felt alone.

rose to go, and felt the chill,  
 And shivered as I went ;  
 Yet shivering wondered, and I  
 wonder still,  
 What more that willow meant ;

That silvery weeping willow tree  
 With all leaves shivering,  
 Which spent one long day over-  
 shadowing me  
 Beside a spring in Spring.

*Before 1882.*

## FLUTTERED WINGS

THE splendour of the kindling day,  
 The splendour of the setting  
 sun,  
 These move my soul to wend its  
 way,  
 And have done  
 With all we grasp and toil amongst  
 and say.

The paling roses of a cloud,  
 The fading bow that arches  
 space,  
 These woo my fancy toward my  
 shroud ;  
 Toward the place  
 Of faces veiled, and heads dis-  
 crowned and bowed.

The nation of the steadfast stars,  
 The wandering star whose blaze  
 is brief,  
 These make me beat against the  
 bars  
 Of my grief ;  
 My tedious grief, twin to the life it  
 mars.

O fretted heart tossed to and fro,  
 So fain to flee, so fain to rest !  
 All glories that are high or low,  
 East or west,  
 Grow dim to thee who art so fain to  
 go.

*Before 1882.*

## A FISHER-WIFE

THE soonest mended, nothing said ;  
And help may rise from east or  
west,

But my two hands are lumps of  
lead,

My heart sits leaden in my breast.

O north wind, swoop not from the  
north,

O south wind, linger in the south,  
Oh come not raving raging forth,  
To bring my heart into my mouth ;

For I've a husband out at sea,  
Afloat on feeble planks of wood ;  
He does not know what fear may  
be ;

I would have told him if I could.

I would have locked him in my  
arms,

I would have hid him in my  
heart ;

For oh the waves are fraught with  
harms,

And he and I so far apart !

*Before 1882.*

## WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

WHY has Spring one syllable less  
Than any its fellow season ?

There may be some other reason,  
And I'm merely making a guess ;

But surely it hoards such wealth  
Of happiness, hope, and health,

Sunshine and musical sound,  
It may spare a foot from its name,

Yet all the same

Superabound.

Soft-named Summer,  
Most welcome comer,

Brings almost everything  
Over which we dream or sing  
Or sigh ;  
But then Summer wends its way,  
To-morrow,—to-day,—  
Good-bye !

Autumn,—the slow name lingers,  
While we likewise flag ;  
It silences many singers ;  
Its slow days drag,  
Yet hasten at speed  
To leave us in chilly need  
For Winter to strip indeed.

In all-lack Winter,  
Dull of sense and of sound,  
We huddle and shiver  
Beside our splinter  
Of crackling pine,  
Snow in sky and snow on ground.  
Winter and cold  
Can't last for ever !  
To-day, to-morrow, the sun will shine  
When we are old.  
But some still are young,  
Singing the song  
Which others have sung,  
Ringing the bells  
Which others have rung,—  
Even so !

We ourselves, who else ?

We ourselves long

Long ago.

*Before 1882.*

## MARIANA

NOT for me marring or making,  
Not for me giving or taking ;

I love my Love and he loves me,

I love my Love and my heart is  
breaking.

Sweet is Spring in its lovely showing,  
 Sweet the violet veiled in blowing,  
 Sweet it is to love and be loved ;  
 Oh sweet knowledge beyond my  
 knowing !

Who sighs for love sighs but for  
 pleasure,  
 Who wastes for love hoards up a  
 treasure ;  
 Sweet to be loved and take no  
 count,  
 Sweet it is to love without measure.

Sweet my Love whom I loved to  
 try for,  
 Sweet my Love whom I love and  
 sigh for,  
 Will you once love me and sigh  
 for me,  
 You my Love whom I love and die  
 for ?

*Before 1882.*

### MEMENTO MORI

POOR the pleasure  
 Measured out by measure,  
 Sweet though it be, while brief  
 As falling of the leaf ;  
 POOR is pleasure  
 Unweighed and measure.

Sweet the sorrow  
 Which ends to-morrow ;  
 Sharp though it be and sore,  
 Ends for evermore :  
 Best of sorrow,  
 That ends to-morrow.

*Before 1882.*

### ONE FOOT ON SEA, AND ONE ON SHORE

‘ Oh tell me once and tell me twice  
 And tell me thrice to make it plain,  
 When we who part this weary day,  
 When we who part shall meet  
 again.’

‘ When windflowers blossom on the  
 sea  
 And fishes skim along the plain,  
 Then we who part this weary day,  
 Then you and I shall meet again.’

‘ Yet tell me once before we part,  
 Why need we part who part in  
 pain ?  
 If flowers must blossom on the sea,  
 Why, we shall never meet again.

‘ My cheeks are paler than a rose,  
 My tears are saltier than the main,  
 My heart is like a lump of ice  
 If we must never meet again.’

‘ Oh weep or laugh, but let me be,  
 And live or die, for all’s in vain ;  
 For life’s in vain since we must part,  
 And parting must not meet again

‘ Till windflowers blossom on the sea  
 And fishes skim along the plain ;  
 Pale rose of roses, let me be,—  
 Your breaking heart breaks mine  
 again.’

*Before 1882.*

### A SONG OF FLIGHT

WHILE we slumber and sleep  
 The sun leaps up from the deep—  
 Daylight born at the leap !—  
 Rapid, dominant, free,  
 Athirst to bathe in the uttermost sea.

While we linger at play—  
 If the year would stand at May!—  
 Winds are up and away  
 Over land, over sea,  
 To their goal wherever their goal  
     may be.

It is time to arise,  
 To race for the promised prize,—  
 The Sun flies, the Wind flies—  
 We are strong, we are free,  
 And home lies beyond the stars and  
     the sea.

*Before 1882.*

### BUDS AND BABIES

A MILLION buds are born that never  
     blow,  
 That sweet with promise lift a  
     pretty head  
 To blush and wither on a barren  
     bed  
 And leave no fruit to show.

Sweet, unfulfilled. Yet have I  
     understood  
 One joy, by their fragility made  
     plain :  
 Nothing was ever beautiful in vain,  
 Or all in vain was good.

*Before 1882.*

### BOY JOHNNY

'If you'll busk you as a bride  
 And make ready,  
 It's I will wed you with a ring,  
     O fair lady.'

'Shall I busk me as a bride,  
     I so bonny,  
 For you to wed me with a ring,  
     O boy Johnny?'

'When you've busked you as a bride  
     And made ready,  
 Who else is there to marry you,  
     O fair lady?'

'I will find my lover out,  
     I so bonny,  
 And you shall bear my wedding  
     train,  
     O boy Johnny.'

*Before 1882.*

### SUMMER IS ENDED

To think that this meaningless thing  
     was ever a rose,  
     Scentless, colourless, *this!*  
 Will it ever be thus (who knows)  
     Thus with our bliss,  
 If we wait till the close?

Though we care not to wait for the  
     end, there comes the end  
     Sooner, later, at last,  
 Which nothing can mar, nothing  
     mend :  
     An end locked fast,  
 Bent we cannot re-bend.

*Before 1882.*

### PASSING AND GLASSING

ALL things that pass  
 Are woman's looking-glass ;  
 They show her how her bloom must  
     fade,  
 And she herself be laid  
 With withered roses in the shade ;



With withered roses and the fallen  
peach,  
Unlovely, out of reach  
Of summer joy that was.

All things that pass  
Are woman's tiring-glass ;  
The faded lavender is sweet,  
Sweet the dead violet  
Culled and laid by and cared for yet ;  
The dried-up violets and dried  
lavender,  
Still sweet, may comfort her,  
Nor need she cry Alas !

All things that pass  
Are wisdom's looking-glass ;  
Being full of hope and fear, and still  
Trimfull of good or ill,  
According to our work and will ;  
For there is nothing new beneath  
the sun ;  
Our doings have been done,  
And that which shall be was.

*Before 1882.*

### SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE

(1674)

HAVE desired, and I have been  
desired :  
But now the days are over of  
desire,  
Now dust and dying embers mock  
my fire :  
There is the hire for which my life  
was hired ?  
Oh vanity of vanities, desire !  
Longing and love, pangs of a  
perished pleasure,  
Longing and love, a disenkindled  
fire,

And memory a bottomless gulf  
of mire,  
And love a fount of tears outrunning  
measure :  
Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Now from my heart, love's deathbed,  
trickles, trickles,  
Drop by drop slowly, drop by  
drop of fire,  
The dross of life, of love, of spent  
desire :  
Alas my rose of life gone all to  
prickles !  
Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !  
Stunting my hope which might  
have strained up higher,  
Turning my garden-plot to barren  
mire ;  
Oh death-struck love, oh disenkindled  
fire,  
Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

*Before 1882.*

### PASTIME

A BOAT amid the ripples, drifting,  
rocking ;  
Two idle people, without pause or  
aim ;  
While in the ominous West there  
gathers darkness  
Flushed with flame.

A hay-cock in a hay-field, backing,  
lapping ;  
Two drowsy people pillowed round-  
about ;  
While in the ominous West across  
the darkness  
Flame leaps out.

Better a wrecked life than a life so  
aimless,  
Better a wrecked life than a life so  
soft :

The ominous West glooms thunder-  
ing, with its fire  
Lit aloft.

*Before 1882.*

### BIRCHINGTON CHURCH- YARD

A LOWLY hill which overlooks a flat,  
Half sea, half country side ;  
A flat-shored sea of low-voiced  
creeping tide  
Over a chalky weedy mat.

A hill of hillocks, flowery and kept  
green  
Round Crosses raised for hope,  
With many-tinted sunsets where  
the slope  
Faces the lingering western sheen.

A lowly hope, a height that is but  
low,  
While Time sets solemnly,  
While the tide rises of Eternity,  
Silent and neither swift nor slow.  
*April 1882.*

### RESURGAM

FROM depth to height, from height  
to loftier height,  
The climber sets his foot and sets  
his face,  
Tracks lingering sunbeams to  
their halting-place,  
And counts the last pulsations of the  
light.

Strenuous thro' day and unsurprised  
by night

He runs a race with Time and  
wins the race,

Emptied and stripped of all save  
only Grace,

Will, Love, a threefold panoply of  
might.

Darkness descends for light he  
toiled to seek :

He stumbles on the darkened  
mountain-head,

Left breathless in the unbreath-  
able thin air,

Made freeman of the living and  
the dead :—

He wots not he has topped the top-  
most peak,

But the returning sun will find  
him there.

*Before 1883.*

### MICHAEL F. M. ROSSETTI

Born 22 April 1881 ; Died 24 January  
1883.

#### I

A HOLY Innocent gone home  
Without so much as one sharp  
wounding word ;  
A blessed Michael in heaven's lofty  
dome  
Without a sword.

#### 2

Brief dawn and noon and setting  
time !  
Our rapid - rounding moon has  
fled ;  
A black eclipse' before the prime  
Has swallowed up that shining  
head.

Eternity holds up her looking-  
glass :—  
The eclipse of Time will  
pass,  
And all that lovely light return to  
sight.

## 3

I watch the showers and think of  
flowers :  
Alas my flower that shows no fruit !  
My snowdrop plucked, my daisy  
shoot  
Plucked from the root.  
Soon Spring will shower, the world  
will flower,  
A world of buds will promise fruit,  
Pear-trees will shoot and apples  
shoot  
Sound at the root.  
Bud of an hour, far off you flower ;  
My bud, far off you ripen fruit ;  
My prettiest bud, my straightest  
shoot,  
Sweet at the root.

## 4

The youngest bud of five,  
The least lamb of the fold,  
Bud not to blossom, yet to thrive  
Away from cold :  
Lamb which we shall not see  
Leap at its pretty pranks,  
Our lamb at rest and full of glee  
On heavenly banks.

*January 1883.*

## A WINTRY SONNET

A ROBIN said : 'The Spring will  
never come,  
And I shall never care to build  
again.'

A Rosebush said : 'These frosts are  
wearisome,  
My sap will never stir for sun or  
rain.'

The half Moon said : 'These nights  
are fogged and slow,  
I neither care to wax nor care to  
wane.'

The Ocean said : 'I thirst from  
long ago,  
Because earth's rivers cannot fill  
the main.—'

When Springtime came, red Robin  
built a nest,  
And trilled a lover's song in sheer  
delight.

Grey hoarfrost vanished, and the  
Rose with might  
Clothed her in leaves and buds  
of crimson core.

The dim Moon brightened. Ocean  
sunned his crest,  
Dimpled his blue, yet thirsted  
evermore.

*Before 1884.*

## ONE SEA-SIDE GRAVE

UNMINDFUL of the roses,  
Unmindful of the thorn,  
A reaper tired reposes  
Among his gathered corn :  
So might I, till the morn !

Cold as the cold Decembers,  
Past as the days that set,  
While only one remembers  
And all the rest forget,—  
But one remembers yet.

*Spring 1884.*

## WHO SHALL SAY?

I TOILED on, but thou  
 Wast weary of the way,  
 And so we parted : now  
 Who shall say  
 Which is happier—I or thou?

I am weary now  
 On the solitary way :  
 But art thou rested, thou?  
 Who shall say  
 Which of us is calmer now?

Still my heart's love, thou,  
 In thy secret way,  
 Art still remembered now :  
 Who shall say—  
 Still rememberest thou?

*Circa 1884.*

ONE SWALLOW DOES NOT  
MAKE A SUMMER

A ROSE which spied one Swallow  
 Made haste to blush and blow :  
 'Others are sure to follow' :  
 Ah no, not so !  
 The wandering clouds still owe  
 A few fresh flakes of snow,  
 Chill fog must fill the hollow,  
 Before the bird-stream flow  
 In flood across the main,  
 And Winter's woe  
 End in glad Summer come again.  
 Then thousand flowers may blossom  
 by the shore,—  
 But that Rose never more.

*Before 1886.*

## A FROG'S FATE

CONTEMPTUOUS of his home beyond  
 The village and the village-pond,  
 A large-souled Frog who spurned  
 each byeway  
 Hopped along the imperial highway.

Nor grunting pig nor barking dog  
 Could disconcert so great a Frog.  
 The morning dew was lingering yet,  
 His sides to cool, his tongue to  
 wet :  
 The night-dew, when the night  
 should come,  
 A travelled Frog would send him  
 home.

Not so, alas ! The wayside grass  
 Sees him no more : not so, alas !  
 A broad-wheeled waggon unawares  
 Ran him down, his joys, his cares.  
 From dying choke one feeble croak  
 The Frog's perpetual silence broke :—  
 'Ye buoyant Frogs, ye great and  
 small,

Even I am mortal after all !  
 My road to fame turns out a wry  
 way ;  
 I perish on the hideous highway ;  
 Oh for my old familiar byeway !'

The choking Frog sobbed and was  
 gone ;  
 The Waggoner strode whistling on.  
 Unconscious of the carnage done,  
 Whistling that Waggoner strode  
 on—  
 Whistling (it may have happened so)  
 'A froggy would a-wooing go.'  
 A hypothetic frog trolled he,  
 Obtuse to a reality.

O rich and poor, O great and small,  
Such oversights beset us all.  
The mangled Frog abides incog,  
The uninteresting actual frog :  
The hypothetic frog alone  
Is the one frog we dwell upon.

*Before 1886.*

### ‘THERE IS A BUDDING MORROW IN MIDNIGHT’

WINTRY boughs against a wintry  
sky ;  
Yet the sky is partly blue  
And the clouds are partly  
bright :—  
Who can tell but sap is mounting  
high  
Out of sight,  
Ready to burst through ?

Winter is the mother-nurse of Spring,  
Lovely for her daughter's sake,  
Not unlovely for her own :  
For a future buds in everything ;  
Grown, or blown,  
Or about to break.

*Before 1890.*

### THE WAY OF THE WORLD

A BOAT that sails upon the sea,  
Sails far and far and far away :  
Who sail in her sing songs of glee,  
Or watch and pray.

A boat that drifts upon the sea,  
Silent and void to sun and air :  
Who sailed in her have ended glee  
And watch and prayer.

*Circa 1890.*

### A HELPMET FOR HIM

WOMAN was made for man's delight ;  
Charm, O woman, be not afraid !  
His shadow by day, his moon by  
night,  
Woman was made.

Her strength with weakness is over-  
laid ;  
Meek compliances veil her might ;  
Him she stays by whom she is stayed.

World-wide champion of truth and  
right,  
Hope in gloom and in danger aid,  
Tender and faithful, ruddy and  
white,  
Woman was made.

*Before 1891.*

### EXULTATE DEO

MANY a flower hath perfume for its  
dower,  
And many a bird a song,  
And harmless lambs milkwhite  
beside their dams  
Frolic along ;  
Perfume and song and whiteness  
offering praise  
In humble peaceful ways.

Man's high degree hath will and  
memory,  
Affection and desire,  
By loftier ways he mounts of prayer  
and praise ;  
Fire unto fire,  
Deep unto deep responsive, height  
to height,  
Until he walk in white.

*Before 1891.*

## BROTHER BRUIN

A DANCING Bear grotesque and  
funny

Earned for his master heaps of  
money,

Gruff yet good-natured, fond of  
honey,

And cheerful if the day was sunny.

Past hedge and ditch, past pond and  
wood,

He tramped, and on some common  
stood ;

There cottage children circling gaily,  
He in their midmost footed daily.

Pandean pipes and drum and muzzle  
Were quite enough his brain to  
puzzle :

But like a philosophic bear

He let alone extraneous care

And danced contented anywhere.

Still, year on year, and wear and  
tear,

Age even the gruffest bluffest bear.

A day came when he scarce could  
prance,

And when his master looked askance

On dancing Bear who would not  
dance.

To looks succeeded blows ; hard  
blows

Battered his ears and poor old nose.  
From bluff and gruff he waxed  
curmudgeon ;

He danced indeed, but danced in  
dudgeon,

Capered in fury fast and faster :—

Ah could he once but hug his master

And perish in one joint disaster !

But deafness, blindness, weakness  
growing,

Not fury's self could keep him going.

One dark day when the snow was  
snowing

His cup was brimmed to overflowing :

He tottered, toppled on one side,  
Growled once, and shook his head,  
and died.

The master kicked and struck in vain ;  
The weary drudge had distanced  
pain,

And never now would wince again.

The master growled : he might have  
howled

Or coaxed—that slave's last growl  
was growled.

So gnawed by rancour and chagrin

One thing remained: he sold the skin.

What next the man did is not worth

Your notice or my setting forth,

But hearken what befell at last.

His idle working days gone past,

And not one friend and not one  
penny

Stored up (if ever he had any  
Friends, but his coppers had been  
many),

All doors stood shut against him, but  
The workhouse door which cannot  
shut.

There he droned on—a grim old  
sinner,

Toothless and grumbling for his  
dinner,

Unpitied quite, uncared for much  
(The ratepayers not favouring such)

Hungry and gaunt, with time to  
spare.

Perhaps the hungry gaunt old Bear  
Danced back, a haunting memory.

Indeed I hope so : for you see

If once the hard old heart relented

The hard old man may have re-  
pentent.

*Before 1892.*

## TO MY FIOR-DI-LISA

THE Rose is Love's own flower, and  
 Love's no less  
 The Lily's tenderness.  
 Then half their dignity must Roses  
 yield  
 To Lilies of the field ?  
 Nay, diverse notes make up true  
 harmony ;  
 All-fashioned loves agree :  
 Love wears the Lily's whiteness, and  
 Love glows  
 In the deep-hearted Rose.  
 1892.

## TO-MORROW

PASSING away the bliss,  
 The anguish passing away :  
 Thus it is  
 To-day.  
 Clean past away the sorrow,  
 The pleasure brought back to stay :  
 Thus and this  
 To-morrow.  
*Before 1893.*

## SLEEPING AT LAST

SLEEPING at last, the trouble and  
 tumult over,  
 Sleeping at last, the struggle and  
 horror past,  
 Cold and white, out of sight of friend  
 and of lover,  
 Sleeping at last.

No more a tired heart downcast  
 or overcast,  
 No more pangs that wring or shifting  
 fears that hover,  
 Sleeping at last in a dreamless  
 sleep locked fast.

Fast asleep. Singing birds in their  
 leafy cover  
 Cannot wake her, nor shake her  
 the gusty blast.  
 Under the purple thyme and the  
 purple clover  
 Sleeping at last.

*Circa 1893.*

POEMS FOR CHILDREN  
AND MINOR VERSE

## SONNETS

## WRITTEN TO BOUTS-RIMÉS

## I

AMID the shades of a deserted hall  
 I stand and think on much that  
 hath been lost.  
 How long it is since other step  
 has crost

R

This time-worn floor ! This tapestry  
 is all  
 Worm-eaten ; and these columns  
 rise up tall  
 Yet crumbling to decay ; where  
 banners tost  
 Thin spiders' webs hang now ;  
 the bitter frost  
 Has even killed the flowers upon  
 the wall.

2 E



Yet once this was a home brimfull of  
 life,  
 Full of the hopes and fears and  
 love of youth,  
 Full of love's language speaking  
 without sound :  
 Here honour was enshrined and  
 kindly truth ;  
 Hither the young lord brought his  
 blushing wife,  
 And here the bridal garlands  
 were unbound.

## II

I SIT among green shady valleys  
 oft,  
 Listening to echo-winds sighing  
 of woe ;  
 The grass and flowers are strong  
 and sweet below ;  
 Yea I am tired, and the smooth turf  
 is soft.  
 I sit and think, and never look  
 aloft,  
 Save to the tops of a tall poplar-  
 row  
 That glisten in the wind, whisper-  
 ing low  
 Of sudden sorrow reaching those  
 who laught.  
 A very drowsy fountain bubbles  
 near,  
 Catching pale sunbeams o'er it  
 wandering ;  
 Its waters are so clear the stones  
 look through :  
 Then, sitting by its lazy stream, I  
 hear  
 Silence more loud than any other  
 thing,  
 What time the trees weep o'er  
 me honey-dew.

## III

WOULDST thou give me a heavy  
 jewelled crown  
 And purple mantle and em-  
 broidered vest ?  
 Dear Child, the colours of the  
 glorious West  
 Are far more gorgeous when the  
 sun sinks down.  
 The diadem would only make me  
 frown  
 With its own weight ; nay give  
 me for my crest  
 Pale violets dreaming in perfect  
 rest,  
 Or rather leaves withered to autumn  
 brown.  
 A purple flowing mantle would but  
 hinder  
 My careless walk, and an em-  
 broidered robe  
 Would shame me. What is  
 the best man who stept  
 On earth more than the naked  
 worm that crept  
 Over its surface ? Earth shall be a  
 cinder ;  
 Where shall be then the beauty  
 of the globe ?

## IV

I SAID within myself : ' I am a fool  
 To sigh ever for that which being  
 gone  
 Cannot return : the sun shines as  
 it shone ;  
 Rejoice.'—But who can be made  
 glad by rule ?  
 My heart and soul and spirit are no  
 tool  
 To play with and direct ; my  
 cheek is wan

With memory; and ever and anon  
I weep, feeling life is a weary school.  
There is much noise and bustle in  
the street;

It used to be so, and it is so now;  
All are the same, and will be  
many a year.

Spirit that canst not break and  
wilt not bow,

Fear not the cold, thou who hast  
borne the heat;—

Die if thou wilt, but what hast  
thou to fear?

## V

I SOUGHT among the living, and I  
seek

Among the dead, for some to  
love; but few

I found at last, and those had  
quite run through

Their store of love; and friendship  
is too weak,

Too cold for me; yet will I never  
speak,

Telling my heart-want to smooth  
listeners who

Would wonder smiling; I can  
bear and do—

Hot shame shall dry no tears upon  
my cheek.

So, when my dust shall mix with  
other dust,

When I shall have found quiet in  
decay,

And lie at ease and cease like  
a mere thought,—

Those whom I loved, thinking  
on me, shall not

Grieve with a measure, saying, 'Now  
we must

Weep for a little ere we laugh  
to-day.'

## VI

AH welladay and wherefore am I  
here?

I sit alone all day, I sit and think—

I watch the sun arise, I watch it  
sink,

And feel no soul-light, though the  
day is clear.

Surely it is a folly, it is mere

Madness, to stand for ever on the  
brink

Of dark despair, and yet not break  
the link

That makes me scorned who cannot  
be held dear.

I will have done with it; I will not  
stand

And fear on without hope, and  
tremble thus,

Look for the break of day and  
miss it ever.

Although my heart be broken,  
they shall never

Say, 'She was glad to sojourn  
among us,

Thankful if one would take her by  
the hand.'

## VII

AND is this August weather? Nay,  
not so.

With the long rain the cornfield  
waxeth dark.

How the cold rain comes pouring  
down! and hark

To the chill wind whose measured  
pace and slow

Seems still to linger, being loth to go.

I cannot stand beside the sea and  
mark

Its grandeur—it's too wet for that:  
no lark

In this drear season cares to sing or  
show.

And, since its name is August, all  
men find

Fire not allowable; winter foregone  
Had more of sunlight and of  
glad warmth more.

I shall be fain to run upon the  
shore

And mark the rain. Hath the  
sun ever shone?

Cheer up! there can be nothing  
worse to mind.

## VIII

METHINKS the ills of life I fain  
would shun;

But then I must shun life, which  
is a blank.

Even in my childhood oft my  
spirit sank,

Thinking of all that had still to be  
done.

Among my many friends there is  
not one

Like her with whom I sat upon  
the bank

Willow-o'ershadowed, from whose  
lips I drank

A love more pure than streams that  
sing and run.

But many times that joy has cost a  
sigh;

And many times I in my heart  
have sought

For the old comfort and not  
found it yet.

Surely in that calm day when I  
shall die

The painful thought will be a  
blessed thought,

And I shall sorrow that I must  
forget.

## IX—THE PLAGUE

'LISTEN, the last stroke of death's  
noon has struck—

The plague is come,' a gnashing  
Madman said,

And laid him down straightway  
upon his bed.

His writhed hands did at the linen  
pluck;

Then all is over. With a careless  
chuck

Among his fellows he is cast.  
How sped

His spirit matters little: many  
dead

Make men hard-hearted. — 'Place  
him on the truck.

Go forth into the burial-ground and  
find

Room at so much a pitful for so  
many.

One thing is to be done; one  
thing is clear:

Keep thou back from the hot un-  
wholesome wind,

That it infect not thee.' Say, is  
there any

Who mourneth for the multi-  
tude dead here?

*August 1848.*

## Xa

WOULD that I were a turnip white  
Or raven black,

Or miserable hack

Dragging a cab from left to  
right;

Or would I were the showman of  
sight,

Or weary donkey with a laden  
back,

Or racer in a sack,

Or freezing traveller on an Alpine  
height ;  
Or would I were straw-catching as  
I drown  
(A wretched landsman I who cannot  
swim),  
Or watching a lone vessel sink,—  
Rather than writing: I would change  
my pink  
Gauze for a hideous yellow satin  
gown  
With deep-cut scalloped edges and  
a rim.

x b

I FANCY the good fairies dressed in  
white,  
Glancing like moonbeams through  
the shadows black,  
Without much work to do for king  
or hack.  
Training perhaps some twisted  
branch aright ;  
Or sweeping faded autumn-leaves  
from sight  
To foster embryo life ; or binding  
back  
Stray tendrils ; or in ample bean-  
pod sack  
Bringing wild honey from the rocky  
height ;  
Or fishing for a fly lest it should  
drown ;  
Or teaching water-lily heads to  
swim,  
Fearful that sudden rain might  
make them sink ;  
Or dyeing the pale rose a  
warmer pink ;  
Or wrapping lilies in their leafy  
gown,  
Yet letting the white peep beyond  
the rim.

## Xc—VANITY FAIR

SOME ladies dress in muslin full and  
white,  
Some gentlemen in cloth succinct  
and black ;  
Some patronize a dog-cart, some  
a hack,  
Some think a painted clarence only  
right.  
Youth is not always such a pleasing  
sight,  
Witness a man with tassels on  
his back ;  
Or woman in a great-coat like a  
sack  
Towering above her sex with horrid  
height.  
If all the world were water fit to  
drown,  
There are some whom you would  
not teach to swim,  
Rather enjoying if you saw  
them sink ;  
Certain old ladies dressed in  
girlish pink,  
With roses and geraniums on their  
gown :  
Go to the Bason, poke them o'er  
the rim.

*Circa 1848.*

## TO LALLA

## READING MY VERSES TOPSY-TURVY

DARLING little Cousin,  
With your thoughtful look  
Reading topsy-turvy  
From a printed book  
English hieroglyphics,  
More mysterious  
To you than Egyptian  
Ones would be to us ;—

Leave off for a minute  
Studying, and say  
What is the impression  
That those marks convey.

Only solemn silence  
And a wondering smile :  
But your eyes are lifted  
Unto mine the while.

In their gaze so steady  
I can surely trace  
That a happy spirit  
Lighteth up your face ;

Tender happy spirit,  
Innocent and pure,  
Teaching more than science,  
And than learning more.

How should I give answer  
To that asking look ?  
Darling little Cousin,  
Go back to your book.

Read on : if you knew it,  
You have cause to boast :  
You are much the wiser  
Though I know the most.  
24 January 1849.

## TWO ENIGMAS

### I

NAME any gentleman you spy,  
And there's a chance that he is I.  
Go out to angle, and you may  
Catch me on a propitious day.  
Booted and spurred, their journey  
ended,  
The weary are by me befriended.  
If roasted meat should be your wish,  
I am more needful than a dish.

I am acknowledgedly poor ;  
Yet my resources are no fewer  
Than all the trades—there is not one  
But I profess, beneath the sun.  
I bear a part in many a game ;  
My worth may change, I am the same.  
Sometimes, by you expelled, I roam  
Forth from the sanctuary of home.

### 2

Me you often meet  
In London's crowded street,  
And merry children's voices my  
resting-place proclaim.  
Pictures and prose and verse  
Compose me—I rehearse  
Evil and good and folly, and call  
each by its name.  
I make men glad, and I  
Can bid their senses fly,  
And festive echoes know me of Isis  
and of Cam.  
But give me to a friend,  
And amity will end,  
Though he may have the temper  
and meekness of a lamb.

*Spring 1849.*

## TWO CHARADES

### I

My first is no proof of my second,  
Though my second's a proof of  
my first.  
If I were my whole, I should tell you  
Quite freely my best and my worst.  
One clue more :—If you fail to  
discover  
My meaning, you're blind as a  
mole ;  
But, if you will frankly confess it,  
You show yourself clearly my  
whole.

2

How many authors are my first !  
 And I shall be so too  
 Unless I finish speedily  
 That which I have to do.

My second is a lofty tree  
 And a delicious fruit ;  
 This in the hot-house flourishes—  
 That amid rocks takes root.

My whole is an immortal queen  
 Renowned in classic lore :  
 Her a god won without her will,  
 And her a goddess bore.  
*Spring 1849.*

## A BOUTS-RIMÉS SONNET

So I grew half delirious and quite  
 sick,  
 And through the darkness saw  
 strange faces grin  
 Of monsters at me. One put  
 forth a fin,  
 And touched me clammily. I could  
 not pick  
 A quarrel with it : it began to lick  
 My hand, making meanwhile a  
 piteous din,  
 And shedding human tears : it  
 would begin  
 To near me, then retreat. I heard  
 the quick  
 Pulsation of my heart, I marked the  
 fight  
 Of life and death within me.  
 Then sleep threw  
 Her veil around me ; but this  
 thing is true.  
 When I awoke the sun was at his  
 height ;

And I wept sadly, knowing that  
 one new  
 Creature had love for me, and others  
 spite.

24 September 1849.

## PORTRAITS

AN easy lazy length of limb,  
 Dark eyes and features from the  
 South,  
 A short-legged meditative pipe  
 Set in a supercilious mouth :  
 Ink and a pen and papers laid  
 Down on a table for the night,  
 Beside a semi-dozing man  
 Who wakes to go to bed by light.

A pair of brothers brotherly,  
 Unlike and yet how much the  
 same  
 In heart and high-toned intellect,  
 In face and bearing, hope and  
 aim :  
 Friends of the selfsame treasured  
 friends  
 And of one home the dear delight,  
 Beloved of many a loving heart,  
 And cherished both in mine,  
 Good-night.

9 May 1853.

## CHARON

IN my cottage near the Styx  
 Co. and Charon still combine  
 Us to ferry o'er like bricks  
 In a boat of chaste design.  
 Cerberus, thou triple fair,  
 Distance doth thy charms impair :

Let the passage give to us  
Charon, Co., and Cerberus.

### CHORUS

Now the passage gives us to  
Charon, Cerberus, and Co.

*June 1853*—Frome Selwood.

### THE P.R.B.

#### I

THE two Rossettis (brothers they)  
And Holman Hunt and John Millais,  
With Stephens chivalrous and bland,  
And Woolner in a distant land—  
In these six men I awestruck see  
Embodied the great P.R.B.  
D. G. Rossetti offered two  
Good pictures to the public view;  
Unnumbered ones great John Millais,  
And Holman more than I can say.

William Rossetti, calm and solemn,  
Cuts up his brethren by the column.  
*19 September 1853.*

#### 2

THE P.R.B. is in its decadence :  
For Woolner in Australia cooks  
his chops,  
And Hunt is yearning for the  
land of Cheops ;  
D. G. Rossetti shuns the vulgar  
optic ;  
While William M. Rossetti merely  
lops  
His B's in English disesteemed  
as Coptic ;  
Calm Stephens in the twilight  
smokes his pipe,  
But long the dawning of his  
public day ;

And he at last the champion  
great Millais,  
Attaining academic opulence,  
Winds up his signature with  
A.R.A.  
So rivers merge in the perpetua  
sea ;  
So luscious fruit must fall when over-  
ripe ;  
And so the consummated P.R.B.  
*10 November 1853.*

### CHILD'S TALK IN APRIL

I WISH you were a pleasant wren,  
And I your small accepted mate ;  
How we'd look down on toilsome  
men !  
We'd rise and go to bed at eight  
Or it may be not quite so late.  
Then you should see the nest I'd  
build,  
The wondrous nest for you and  
me ;  
The outside rough perhaps, but  
filled  
With wool and down ; ah you  
should see  
The cosy nest that it would be.  
We'd have our change of hope and  
fear,  
Small quarrels, reconcilements  
sweet :  
I'd perch by you to chirp and cheer,  
Or hop about on active feet,  
And fetch you dainty bits to eat.  
We'd be so happy by the day,  
So safe and happy through the  
night,  
We both should feel, and I should  
say,



It's all one season of delight,  
And we'll make merry whilst we may.

Perhaps some day there'd be an egg  
When spring had blossomed from  
the snow :

I'd stand triumphant on one leg ;  
Like chanticleer I'd almost crow  
To let our little neighbours know.

Next you should sit and I would sing  
Through lengthening days of sunny  
spring ;

Till, if you wearied of the task,  
I'd sit ; and you should spread your  
wing

From bough to bough ; I'd sit  
and bask.

Fancy the breaking of the shell,  
The chirp, the chickens wet and  
bare,

The untried proud paternal swell ;  
And you with housewife-matron  
air

Enacting choicer bills of fare.

Fancy the embryo coats of down,  
The gradual feathers soft and  
sleek ;

Till clothed and strong from tail to  
crown,

With virgin warblings in their  
beak,

They too go forth to soar and  
seek.

So would it last an April through  
And early summer fresh with dew,—  
Then should we part and live as  
twain :

Love-time would bring me back to  
you,

And build our happy nest again.

8 March 1855.

## WINTER

SWEET blackbird is silenced with  
chaffinch and thrush,  
Only waistcoated robin still chirps  
in the bush :

Soft sun-loving swallows have  
mustered in force,

And winged to the spice-teeming  
southlands their course.

Plump housekeeper dormouse has  
tucked himself neat,

Just a brown ball in moss with a  
morsel to eat :

Armed hedgehog has huddled him  
into the hedge,

While frogs scarce miss freezing  
deep down in the sedge.

Soft swallows have left us alone in  
the lurch,

But robin sits whistling to us from  
his perch :

If I were red robin, I'd pipe you a  
tune

Would make you despise all the  
beauties of June.

But, since that cannot be, let us  
draw round the fire,

Munch chesnuts, tell stories, and  
stir the blaze higher :

We'll comfort pinched robin with  
crumbs, little man,

Till he sings us the very best song  
that he can.

28 November 1856.

## LOVE'S NAME

LOVE hath a name of Death :  
He gives a breath

And takes away.  
 Lo we, beneath his sway,  
 Grow like a flower ;  
 To bloom an hour,  
 To droop a day,  
 And fade away.

*Circa 1869.*

## GOLDEN HOLLY

COMMON Holly bears a berry  
 To make Christmas Robins merry :—  
 Golden Holly bears a rose,  
 Unfolding at October's close  
 To cheer an old Friend's eyes and  
 nose.

*Circa 1872.*

## SING-SONG

### A NURSERY RHYME BOOK

[N.B.—*The date of Sing-song as a whole is 'Before 1873' : but a few of the compositions were written and inserted at a much later date. Those few are marked 'Before 1894.'*]

RHYMES DEDICATED  
 WITHOUT PERMISSION  
 TO THE BABY  
 WHO SUGGESTED THEM

ANGELS at the foot,  
 And Angels at the head,  
 And like a curly little lamb  
 My pretty babe in bed.

LOVE me,—I love you,  
 Love me, my baby ;  
 Sing it high, sing it low,  
 Sing it as may be.

Mother's arms under you,  
 Her eyes above you ;  
 Sing it high, sing it low,  
 Love me,—I love you.

My baby has a father and a mother  
 Rich little baby !  
 Fatherless, motherless, I know an  
 other  
 Forlorn as may be :  
 Poor little baby !

OUR little baby fell asleep,  
 And may not wake again  
 For days and days, and weeks and  
 weeks ;  
 But then he'll wake again,  
 And come with his own pretty look  
 And kiss Mamma again.

'KOOKOOROOKOO ! kookoorookoo !  
 Crows the cock before the morn  
 'Kikirikee ! kikirikee !'  
 Roses in the east are born.

'Kookoorookoo ! kookoorookoo !'  
 Early birds begin their singing ;  
 'Kikirikee ! kikirikee !'  
 The day, the day, the day is  
 springing.

BABY cry—  
 Oh fie !—  
 At the physic in the cup :  
 Gulp it twice  
 And gulp it thrice,  
 Baby gulp it up.

EIGHT o'clock ;  
 The postman's knock !  
 Five letters for Papa ;°

One for Lou,  
And none for you,  
And three for dear Mamma.

---

BREAD and milk for breakfast,  
And woollen frocks to wear,  
And a crumb for robin redbreast  
On the cold days of the year.

---

THERE'S snow on the fields,  
And cold in the cottage,  
While I sit in the chimney nook  
Supping hot pottage.

My clothes are soft and warm,  
Fold upon fold,  
But I'm so sorry for the poor  
Out in the cold.

---

DEAD in the cold, a song-singing  
thrush,  
Dead at the foot of a snowberry  
bush,—  
Weave him a coffin of rush,  
Dig him a grave where the soft  
mosses grow,  
Raise him a tombstone of snow.

---

I DUG and dug amongst the snow,  
And thought the flowers would never  
grow ;  
I dug and dug amongst the sand,  
And still no green thing came to  
hand.

Melt, O snow ! the warm winds  
blow  
To thaw the flowers and melt the  
snow ;  
But all the winds from every land  
Will rear no blossom from the sand.

A CITY plum is not a plum ;  
A dumb-bell is no bell, though  
dumb ;

A party rat is not a rat ;  
A sailor's cat is not a cat ;  
A soldier's frog is not a frog ;  
A captain's log is not a log.

---

YOUR brother has a falcon,  
Your sister has a flower ;  
But what is left for mannikin,  
Born within an hour ?

I'll nurse you on my knee, my knee,  
My own little son ;  
I'll rock you, rock you, in my arms,  
My least little one.

---

HEAR what the mournful linnets  
say :  
'We built our nest compact and  
warm,  
But cruel boys came round our way  
And took our summerhouse by  
storm.

'They crushed the eggs so neatly  
laid ;  
So now we sit with drooping  
wing,  
And watch the ruin they have made,  
Too late to build, too sad to  
sing.'

---

A BABY'S cradle with no baby in it,  
A baby's grave where autumn  
leaves drop sere ;  
The sweet soul gathered home to  
Paradise,  
The body waiting here.

HOP-O'-MY-THUMB and little Jack  
 Horner,  
 What do you mean by tearing and  
 fighting?  
 Sturdy dog Trot close round the  
 corner,  
 I never caught him growling and  
 biting.

---

HOPE is like a harebell trembling  
 from its birth,  
 Love is like a rose the joy of all the  
 earth;  
 Faith is like a lily lifted high and  
 white,  
 Love is like a lovely rose the world's  
 delight;  
 Harebells and sweet lilies show a  
 thornless growth,  
 But the rose with all its thorns excels  
 them both.

---

O WIND, why do you never rest,  
 Wandering, whistling to and fro,  
 Bringing rain out of the west,  
 From the dim north bringing  
 snow?

---

CRYING, my little one, footsore and  
 weary?  
 Fall asleep, pretty one, warm on  
 my shoulder:  
 I must tramp on through the winter  
 night dreary,  
 While the snow falls on me colder  
 and colder.

You are my one, and I have not  
 another;  
 Sleep soft, my darling, my trouble  
 and treasure;

Sleep warm and soft in the arms of  
 your mother,  
 Dreaming of pretty things, dream-  
 ing of pleasure.

---

GROWING in the vale  
 By the uplands hilly,  
 Growing straight and frail,  
 Lady Daffadowndilly.

---

In a golden crown,  
 And a scant green gown  
 While the spring blows chilly,  
 Lady Daffadown,  
 Sweet Daffadowndilly.

---

A LINNET in a gilded cage,—  
 A linnet on a bough,—  
 In frosty winter one might doubt  
 Which bird is luckier now.

---

But let the trees burst out in leaf,  
 And nests be on the bough,—  
 Which linnet is the luckier bird,  
 Oh who could doubt it now?

---

WRENS and robins in the hedge,  
 Wrens and robins here and there  
 Building, perching, pecking, flutter-  
 ing,  
 Everywhere!

---

My baby has a mottled fist,  
 My baby has a neck in creases;  
 My baby kisses and is kissed,  
 For he's the very thing for kisses

---

WHY did baby die,  
 Making Father sigh,  
 Mother cry?

Flowers, that bloom to die,  
Make no reply  
Of 'why?'  
But bow and die.

---

IF all were rain and never sun,  
No bow could span the hill;  
If all were sun and never rain,  
There'd be no rainbow still.

---

O WIND, where have you been,  
That you blow so sweet?  
Among the violets  
Which blossom at your feet.

---

The honeysuckle waits  
For Summer and for heat;  
But violets in the chilly Spring  
Make the turf so sweet.

---

BROWNIE, Brownie, let down your  
milk,  
White as swansdown and smooth as  
silk,  
Fresh as dew and pure as snow:  
For I know where the cowslips blow,  
And you shall have a cowslip wreath  
No sweeter scented than your breath.

*Before 1894.*

---

ON the grassy banks  
Lambkins at their pranks;  
Woolly sisters, woolly brothers,  
Jumping off their feet,  
While their woolly mothers  
Watch by them and bleat.

---

RUSHES in a watery place,  
And reeds in a hollow;

A soaring skylark in the sky,  
A darting swallow;  
And where pale blossom used to  
hang  
Ripe fruit to follow.

---

MINNIE and Mattie  
And fat little May,  
Out in the country,  
Spending a day.

---

Such a bright day,  
With the sun glowing,  
And the trees half in leaf,  
And the grass growing.

---

Pinky white pigling  
Squeals through his snout,  
Woolly white lambkin  
Frisks all about.

---

Cluck! cluck! the nursing hen  
Summons her folk,—  
Ducklings all downy soft,  
Yellow as yolk.

---

Cluck! cluck! the mother hen  
Summons her chickens  
To peck the dainty bits  
Found in her pickings.

---

Minnie and Mattie  
And May carry posies,  
Half of sweet violets,  
Half of primroses.

---

Give the sun time enough,  
Glowing and glowing,  
He'll rouse the roses  
And bring them blowing.

---

Don't wait for roses  
Losing to-day,

O Minnie, Mattie,  
And wise little May.

Violets and primroses  
Blossom to-day  
For Minnie and Mattie  
And fat little May.

---

HEARTSEASE in my garden bed,  
With sweetwilliam white and red,  
Honeysuckle on my wall :—  
Heartsease blossoms in my heart  
When sweet William comes to call ;  
But it withers when we part,  
And the honey-trumpets fall.

---

‘ IF I were a Queen,  
What would I do ?  
I’d make you King,  
And I’d wait on you.’

‘ If I were a King,  
What would I do ?  
I’d make you Queen,  
For I’d marry you.’

---

WHAT are heavy ? sea-sand and  
sorrow :  
What are brief ? to-day and to-  
morrow :  
What are frail ? Spring blossoms  
and youth :  
What are deep ? the ocean and  
truth.

---

STROKE a flint, and there is nothing  
to admire :  
Strike a flint, and forthwith flash  
out sparks of fire.

*Before 1894.*

THERE is but one May in the year,  
And sometimes May is wet and  
cold ;

There is but one May in the year  
Before the year grows old.

Yet though it be the chilliest May,  
With least of sun and most of  
showers,  
Its wind and dew, its night and day,  
Bring up the flowers.

---

THE summer nights are short  
Where northern days are long :  
For hours and hours lark after lark  
Trills out his song.

The summer days are short  
Where southern nights are long :  
Yet short the night when nightin-  
gales  
Trill out their song.

---

THE days are clear,  
Day after day,  
When April’s here,  
That leads to May,  
And June  
Must follow soon :  
Stay, June, stay !—  
If only we could stop the moon  
And June !

---

‘ TWIST me a crown of wind-flowers  
That I may fly away  
To hear the singers at their song,  
And players at their play.’

‘ Put on your crown of wind-flowers :  
But whither would you go ?’  
‘ Beyond the surging of the sea  
And the storms that blow.’

'Alas ! your crown of wind-flowers  
Can never make you fly :  
I twist them in a crown to-day,  
And to-night they die.'

---

BROWN and furry  
Caterpillar in a hurry  
Take your walk  
To the shady leaf, or stalk,  
Or what not,  
Which may be the chosen spot.  
No toad spy you,  
Hovering bird of prey pass by you ;  
Spin and die,  
To live again a butterfly.

---

A TOADSTOOL comes up in a  
night,—  
Learn the lesson, little folk :—  
An oak grows on a hundred years,  
But then it is an oak.

---

A POCKET handkerchief to hem—  
Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear !  
How many stitches it will take  
Before it's done, I fear.

---

Yet set a stitch and then a stitch,  
And stitch and stitch away,  
Till stitch by stitch the hem is done—  
And after work is play !

---

If a pig wore a wig,  
What could we say ?  
Treat him as a gentleman,  
And say ' Good-day.'

---

If his tail chanced to fail,  
What could we do ?—  
Send him to the tailorress  
To get one new.

SELDOM ' can't,'  
Seldom ' don't' ;  
Never ' shan't,'  
Never ' won't.'

---

1 and 1 are 2—  
That's for me and you.

2 and 2 are 4—  
That's a couple more.

3 and 3 are 6  
Barley-sugar sticks.

4 and 4 are 8  
Tumblers at the gate.

5 and 5 are 10  
Bluff seafaring men.

6 and 6 are 12  
Garden lads who delve.

7 and 7 are 14  
Young men bent on sporting.

8 and 8 are 16  
Pills the doctor's mixing.

9 and 9 are 18  
Passengers kept waiting.

10 and 10 are 20  
Roses—pleasant plenty !

11 and 11 are 22  
Sums for brother George to do.

12 and 12 are 24  
Pretty pictures, and no more.

---

How many seconds in a minute ?  
Sixty, and no more in it.



How many minutes in an hour ?  
Sixty for sun and shower.

How many hours in a day ?  
Twenty-four for work and play.

How many days in a week ?  
Seven both to hear and speak.

How many weeks in a month ?  
Four, as the swift moon runn'th.

How many months in a year ?  
Twelve the almanack makes clear.

How many years in an age ?  
One hundred says the sage.

How many ages in time ?  
No one knows the rhyme.

---

WHAT will you give me for my  
pound ?

Full twenty shillings round.

What will you give me for my  
shilling ?

Twelve pence to give I'm willing.

What will you give me for my penny ?

Four farthings, just so many.

---

JANUARY cold desolate ;  
February all dripping wet ;  
March wind ranges ;  
April changes ;  
Birds sing in tune  
To flowers of May,  
And sunny June  
Brings longest day ;  
In scorched July  
The storm-clouds fly  
Lightning-torn ;  
August bears corn,

September fruit ;  
In rough October  
Earth must disrobe her ;  
Stars fall and shoot  
In keen November ;  
And night is long  
And cold is strong  
In bleak December.

---

WHAT is pink ? a rose is pink  
By the fountain's brink.  
What is red ? a poppy's red  
In its barley bed.  
What is blue ? the sky is blue  
Where the clouds float thro' .  
What is white ? a swan is white  
Sailing in the light.  
What is yellow ? pears are yellow  
Rich and ripe and mellow.  
What is green ? the grass is green  
With small flowers between.  
What is violet ? clouds are violet  
In the summer twilight.  
What is orange ? why, an orange  
Just an orange !

---

MOTHER shake the cherry-tree,  
Susan catch a cherry ;  
Oh how funny that will be,  
Let's be merry !

One for brother, one for sister,  
Two for mother more,  
Six for father, hot and tired,  
Knocking at the door.

---

A PIN has a head, but has no hair  
A clock has 'a face, but no mouth  
there ;  
Needles have eyes, but they cannot  
see ;  
A fly has a trunk without lock or key

A timepiece may lose, but cannot win ;  
 A corn-field dimples without a chin ;  
 A hill has no leg, but has a foot ;  
 A wine-glass a stem, but not a root ;  
 A watch has hands, but no thumb  
 or finger ;  
 A boot has a tongue, but is no singer ;  
 Rivers run, though they have no feet ;  
 A saw has teeth, but it does not eat ;  
 Ash-trees have keys, yet never a lock ;  
 And baby crows, without being a  
 cock.

HOPPING frog, hop here and be seen,  
 I'll not pelt you with stick or  
 stone :  
 Your cap is laced and your coat is  
 green ;  
 Good-bye, we'll let each other  
 alone.

Plodding toad, plod here and be  
 looked at,  
 You the finger of scorn is crooked at :  
 But though you're lumpish, you're  
 harmless too ;  
 You won't hurt me, and I won't hurt  
 you.

WHERE innocent bright-eyed daisies  
 are,  
 With blades of grass between,  
 Each daisy stands up like a star  
 Out of a sky of green.

THE city mouse lives in a house ;—  
 The garden mouse lives in a  
 bower,  
 He's friendly with the frogs and  
 toads,  
 And sees the pretty plants in  
 flower.

The city mouse eats bread and  
 cheese ;—  
 The garden mouse eats what he  
 can ;  
 We will not grudge him seeds and  
 stalks,  
 Poor little timid furry man.

WHAT does the donkey bray about ?  
 What does the pig grunt through  
 his snout ?  
 What does the goose mean by a hiss ?  
 Oh, Nurse, if you can tell me this,  
 I'll give you such a kiss.

The cockatoo calls 'cockatoo,'  
 The magpie chatters 'how d'ye do ?'  
 The jackdaw bids me 'go away,'  
 Cuckoo cries 'cuckoo' half the  
 day :  
 What do the others say ?

THREE plum buns  
 To eat here at the stile  
 In the clover meadow,  
 For we have walked a mile.

One for you, and one for me,  
 And one left over :  
 Give it to the boy who shouts  
 To scare sheep from the clover.

A MOTHERLESS soft lambkin  
 Alone upon a hill ;  
 No mother's fleece to shelter him  
 And wrap him from the cold :—  
 I'll run to him and comfort him,  
 I'll fetch him, that I will ;  
 I'll care for him and feed him  
 Until he's strong and bold.

DANCING on the hill-tops,  
Singing in the valleys,  
Laughing with the echoes,  
Merry little Alice.

Playing games with lambkins  
In the flowering valleys,  
Gathering pretty posies,  
Helpful little Alice.

If her father's cottage  
Turned into a palace,  
And he owned the hill-tops  
And the flowering valleys,  
She'd be none the happier,  
Happy little Alice.

WHEN fishes set umbrellas up  
If the rain-drops run,  
Lizards will want their parasols  
To shade them from the sun.

THE peacock has a score of eyes,  
With which he cannot see ;  
The cod-fish has a silent sound,  
However that may be ;

No dandelions tell the time,  
Although they turn to clocks ;  
Cat's-cradle does not hold the cat,  
Nor foxglove fit the fox.

PUSSY has a whiskered face,  
Kitty has such pretty ways ;  
Doggie scampers when I call,  
And has a heart to love us all.

THE dog lies in his kennel,  
And Puss purrs on the rug,  
And baby perches on my knee  
For me to love and hug.

Pat the dog and stroke the cat,  
Each in its degree ;  
And cuddle and kiss my baby,  
And baby kiss me.

If hope grew on a bush,  
And joy grew on a tree,  
What a nosegay for the plucking  
There would be !

But oh in windy autumn,  
When frail flowers wither,  
What should we do for hope and joy  
Fading together ?

I PLANTED a hand  
And there came up a palm,  
I planted a heart  
And there came up balm.

Then I planted a wish,  
But there sprang a thorn,  
While heaven frowned with thunde  
And earth sighed forlorn.

UNDER the ivy bush  
One sits sighing,  
And under the willow tree  
One sits crying :—

Under the ivy bush  
Cease from your sighing,  
But under the willow tree  
Lie down a-dying.

I AM a King,  
Or an Emperor rather,  
I wear crown-imperial  
And prince's-feather ;

Golden-rod is the sceptre  
 I wield and wag,  
 And a broad purple flag-flower  
 Waves for my flag.

Elder the pithy  
 With old-man and sage,  
 These are my councillors  
 Green in old age ;  
 Lords-and-ladies in silence  
 Stand round me and wait,  
 While gay ragged-robin  
 Makes bows at my gate.

*Before 1894.*

THERE is one that has a head with-  
 out an eye,  
 And there's one that has an eye  
 without a head :  
 You may find the answer if you try ;  
 And when all is said,  
 Half the answer hangs upon a  
 thread.

If a mouse could fly,  
 Or if a crow could swim,  
 Or if a sprat could walk and talk,  
 I'd like to be like him.

If a mouse could fly,  
 He might fly away ;  
 Or if a crow could swim,  
 It might turn him grey ;  
 Or if a sprat could walk and talk,  
 What would he find to say ?

SING me a song.—  
 What shall I sing ?—  
 Three merry sisters  
 Dancing in a ring,  
 Light and fleet upon their feet  
 As birds upon the wing.

Tell me a tale.—  
 What shall I tell ?—  
 Two mournful sisters,  
 And a tolling knell,  
 Tolling ding and tolling dong,  
 Ding dong bell.

THE lily has an air,  
 And the snowdrop a grace,  
 And the sweetpea a way,  
 And the heartsease a face,—  
 Yet there's nothing like the rose  
 When she blows.

MARGARET has a milking-pail,  
 And she rises early ;  
 Thomas has a threshing-flail,  
 And he's up betimes.  
 Sometimes crossing through the  
 grass  
 Where the dew lies pearly,  
 They say 'Good-morrow' as they  
 pass  
 By the leafy limes.

IN the meadow—what in the  
 meadow ?  
 Bluebells, buttercups, meadowsweet,  
 And fairy rings for the children's  
 feet  
 In the meadow.

In the garden—what in the  
 garden ?  
 Jacob's-ladder and Solomon's-seal,  
 And Love-lies-bleeding beside All-  
 heal  
 In the garden.

A FRISKY lamb  
 And a frisky child

Playing their pranks  
 In a cowslip meadow :  
 The sky all blue  
 And the air all mild  
 And the fields all sun  
 And the lanes half shadow.

---

✓ MIX a pancake,  
 Stir a pancake,  
 Pop it in the pan ;  
 Fry the pancake,  
 Toss the pancake,—  
 Catch it if you can.

---

THE wind has such a rainy sound  
 Moaning through the town,  
 The sea has such a windy sound,—  
 Will the ships go down ?

The apples in the orchard  
 Tumble from their tree.—  
 Oh will the ships go down, go down,  
 In the windy sea ?

---

THREE little children  
 On the wide wide earth,  
 Motherless children—  
 Cared for from their birth  
 By tender angels.

Three little children  
 On the wide wide sea,  
 Motherless children—  
 Safe as safe can be  
 With guardian angels.

---

FLY away, fly away over the sea,  
 Sun-loving swallow, for summer is  
 done ;  
 Come again, come again, come back  
 to me,  
 Bringing the summer and bring-  
 ing the sun.

MINNIE bakes oaten cakes,  
 Minnie brews ale,  
 All because her Johnny's coming  
 Home from sea.  
 And she glows like a rose,  
 Who was so pale,  
 And 'Are you sure the church clock  
 goes ?'  
 Says she.

---

A WHITE hen sitting  
 On white eggs three :  
 Next, three speckled chickens  
 As plump as plump can be.

An owl and a hawk  
 And a bat come to see ;  
 But chicks beneath their mother's  
 wing  
 Squat safe as safe can be.

---

CURRENTS on a bush,  
 And figs upon a stem,  
 And cherries on a bending bough,  
 And Ned to gather them.

---

PLAYING at bob cherry  
 Tom and Nell and Hugh :  
 Cherry bob ! cherry bob !  
 There's a bob for you.

Tom bobs a cherry  
 For gaping snapping Hugh,  
 While curly-pated Nelly  
 Snaps at it too.

Look, look, look—  
 Oh what a sight to see !  
 The wind is playing cherry bob  
 With the cherry tree.

*Before 1894.*

I HAVE but one rose in the world,  
 And my one rose stands a-droop-  
 ing :  
 Oh when my single rose is dead  
 There'll be but thorns for stooping.

---

ROSY maiden Winifred,  
 With a milkpail on her head,  
 Tripping through the corn,  
 While the dew lies on the wheat  
 In the sunny morn.  
 Scarlet shepherd's-weatherglass  
 Spreads wide open at her feet  
 As they pass ;  
 Cornflowers give their almond smell  
 While she brushes by,  
 And a lark sings from the sky  
 'All is well.'

---

BLIND from my birth,  
 Where flowers are springing  
 I sit on earth  
 All dark.  
 Hark ! hark !  
 A lark is singing,  
 His notes are all for me,  
 For me his mirth :—  
 Till some day I shall see  
 Beautiful flowers  
 And birds in bowers  
 Where all joy-bells are ringing.

*Before 1894.*

---

WHEN the cows come home the  
 milk is coming,  
 Honey's made while the bees are  
 humming ;  
 Duck and drake on the rushy lake,  
 And the deer live safe in the breezy  
 brake ;

And timid, funny, brisk little bunny  
 Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

---

ROSES blushing red and white,  
 For delight ;  
 Honeysuckle wreaths above,  
 For love ;  
 Dim sweet-scented heliotrope,  
 For hope ;  
 Shining lilies tall and straight,  
 For royal state ;  
 Dusky pansies, let them be  
 For memory ;  
 With violets of fragrant breath,  
 For death.

---

'DING a ding,'  
 The sweet bells sing,  
 And say,  
 'Come, all be gay,'  
 For a wedding day.

'Dong a dong,'  
 The bells sigh long,  
 And call,  
 'Weep one, weep all,'  
 For a funeral.

---

A RING upon her finger,  
 Walks the bride,  
 With the bridegroom tall and hand-  
 some  
 At her side.

A veil upon her forehead,  
 Walks the bride,  
 With the bridegroom proud and  
 merry  
 At her side.

Fling flowers beneath the footsteps  
Of the bride ;  
Fling flowers before the bridegroom  
At her side.

---

‘FERRY me across the water,  
Do, boatman, do.’  
‘If you’ve a penny in your purse  
I’ll ferry you.’

---

‘I have a penny in my purse,  
And my eyes are blue ;  
So ferry me across the water,  
Do, boatman, do.’

---

‘Step into my ferry-boat,  
Be they black or blue,  
And for the penny in your purse  
I’ll ferry you.’

---

WHEN a mounting skylark sings  
In the sunlit summer morn,  
I know that heaven is up on high,  
And on earth are fields of corn.

But when a nightingale sings  
In the moonlit summer even,  
I know not if earth is merely earth,  
Only that heaven is heaven.

---

WHO has seen the wind ?  
Neither I nor you :  
But when the leaves hang trembling  
The wind is passing thro’.

---

Who has seen the wind ?  
Neither you nor I :  
But when the trees bow down their  
heads  
The wind is passing by.

THE horses of the sea  
Rear a foaming crest,  
But the horses of the land  
Serve us the best.

The horses of the land  
Munch corn and clover,  
While the foaming sea-horses  
Toss and turn over.

---

O SAILOR, come ashore,  
What have you brought fo  
me ?

Red coral, white coral,  
Coral from the sea.

I did not dig it from the ground,  
Nor pluck it from a tree ;  
Feeble insects made it  
In the stormy sea.

---

A DIAMOND or a coal ?  
A diamond, if you please :  
Who cares about a clumsy coal  
Beneath the summer trees ?

A diamond or a coal ?  
A coal, sir, if you please :  
One comes to care about the coal  
What time the waters freeze.

---

AN emerald is as green as grass ;  
A ruby red as blood ;  
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven  
A flint lies in the mud.

---

A diamond is a brilliant stone,  
To catch the world’s desire ;  
An opal holds a fiery spark ;  
But a flint holds fire.



BOATS sail on the rivers,  
And ships sail on the seas ;  
But clouds that sail across the sky  
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,  
As pretty as you please ;  
But the bow that bridges heaven,  
And overtops the trees,  
And builds a road from earth to sky,  
Is prettier far than these.

THE lily has a smooth stalk,  
Will never hurt your hand ;  
But the rose upon her briar  
Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,  
And profit in the corn ;  
But lady of all beauty  
Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey  
She tips her bending briar,  
And half unfolds her glowing heart,  
She sets the world on fire.

HURT no living thing :  
Ladybird, nor butterfly,  
Nor moth with dusty wing,  
Nor cricket chirping cheerily,  
Nor grasshopper so light of leap,  
Nor dancing gnat, nor beetle fat,  
Nor harmless worms that creep.

I CAUGHT a little ladybird  
That flies far away ;  
I caught a little lady wife  
That is both staid and gay.

Come back, my scarlet ladybird,  
Back from far away ;  
I weary of my dolly wife,  
My wife that cannot play.

She's such a senseless wooden thing  
She stares the livelong day ;  
Her wig of gold is stiff and cold  
And cannot change to grey.  
*Before 1873 and 1894.*

ALL the bells were ringing  
And all the birds were singing,  
When Molly sat down crying  
For her broken doll :  
O you silly Moll !  
Sobbing and sighing  
For a broken doll,  
When all the bells are ringing  
And all the birds are singing.

WEE wee husband,  
Give me some money,  
I have no comfits,  
And I have no honey.

Wee wee wife,  
I have no money,  
Milk, nor meat, nor bread to eat,  
Comfits, nor honey.

I HAVE a little husband  
And he is gone to sea ;  
The winds that whistle round his  
ship  
Fly home to me.

The winds that sigh about me  
Return again to him ;  
So I would fly, if only I  
Were light of limb.  
*Before 1873 and 1894.*

THE dear old woman in the lane  
 Is sick and sore with pains and  
 aches;  
 We'll go to her this afternoon,  
 And take her tea and eggs and  
 cakes.

We'll stop to make the kettle boil,  
 And brew some tea, and set the  
 tray,  
 And poach an egg, and toast a cake,  
 And wheel her chair round, if we  
 may.

*Before 1873 and 1894.*

---

SWIFT and sure the swallow,  
 Slow and sure the snail :  
 Slow and sure may miss his way,  
 Swift and sure may fail.

---

'I DREAMT I caught a little owl  
 And the bird was blue—'

'But you may hunt for ever  
 And not find such an one.'

'I dreamt I set a sunflower,  
 And red as blood it grew—'

'But such a sunflower never  
 Bloomed beneath the sun.'

---

WHAT does the bee do ?  
 Bring home honey.  
 And what does Father do ?  
 Bring home money.  
 And what does Mother do ?  
 Lay out the money.  
 And what does baby do ?  
 Eat up the honey.

I HAVE a Poll parrot,  
 And Poll is my doll,  
 And my nurse is Polly,  
 And my sister Poll.

'Polly !' cried Polly,  
 'Don't tear Polly dolly'—  
 While soft-hearted Poll  
 Trembled for the doll.

*Before 1873 and 1894.*

---

A HOUSE of cards  
 Is neat and small :  
 Shake the table,  
 It must fall.

Find the Court cards  
 One by one ;  
 Raise it, roof it,—  
 Now it's done :—  
 Shake the table !  
 That's the fun.

---

THE rose with such a bonny blush,  
 What has the rose to blush about—  
 If it's the sun that makes her flush,  
 What's in the sun to flush about :

---

THE rose that blushes rosy red,  
 She must hang her head ;  
 The lily that blows spotless white,  
 She may stand upright.

---

OH fair to see  
 Bloom-laden cherry tree,  
 Arrayed in sunny white,  
 An April day's delight ;  
 Oh fair to see !

Oh fair to see  
 Fruit-laden cherry tree,

With balls of shining red.  
 Decking a leafy head ;  
 Oh fair to see !

---

CLEVER little Willie wee,  
 Bright-eyed, blue-eyed little fellow ;  
 Merry little Margery  
 With her hair all yellow.

Little Willie in his heart  
 Is a sailor on the sea,  
 And he often cons a chart  
 With sister Margery.  
*Before 1873 and 1894.*

---

THE peach tree on the southern wall  
 Has basked so long beneath the  
 sun,  
 Her score of peaches great and small  
 Bloom rosy, every one.

A peach for brothers, one for each,  
 A peach for you and a peach for  
 me ;  
 But the biggest, rosiest, downiest  
 peach  
 For Grandmamma with her tea.  
*Before 1873 and 1894.*

---

A ROSE has thorns as well as honey,  
 I'll not have her for love or money ;  
 An iris grows so straight and fine  
 That she shall be no friend of mine ;  
 Snowdrops like the snow would chill  
 me ;  
 Nightshade would caress and kill  
 me ;  
 Crocus like a spear would fright  
 me ;  
 Dragon's-mouth might bark or bite  
 me ;

Convolvulus but blooms to die ;  
 A wind-flower suggests a sigh ;  
 Love-lies-bleeding makes me sad ;  
 And poppy-juice would drive me  
 mad :—  
 But give me holly, bold and jolly,  
 Honest, prickly, shining holly ;  
 Pluck me holly leaf and berry  
 For the day when I make merry.

---

Is the moon tired? she looks so  
 pale  
 Within her misty veil :  
 She scales the sky from east to  
 west,  
 And takes no rest.

Before the coming of the night  
 The moon shows papery white ;  
 Before the dawning of the day  
 She fades away.

---

IF stars dropped out of heaven,  
 And if flowers took their place,  
 The sky would still look very fair,  
 And fair earth's face.

Winged angels might fly down to us  
 To pluck the stars,  
 But we could only long for flowers  
 Beyond the cloudy bars.

---

'GOOD-BYE in fear, good-bye in  
 sorrow,  
 Goodbye, and all in vain,  
 Never to meet again, my dear'—  
 'Never to part again.'  
 'Good-bye to-day, good-bye to-  
 morrow,  
 Good-bye till earth shall wane,  
 Never to meet again, my dear'—  
 'Never to part again.'

IF the sun could tell us half  
 That he hears and sees,  
 Sometimes he would make us laugh,  
     Sometimes make us cry :  
 Think of all the birds that make  
     Homes among the trees ;  
 Think of cruel boys who take  
     Birds that cannot fly.

---

IF the moon came from heaven,  
 Talking all the way,  
 What could she have to tell us,  
 And what could she say ?

‘I’ve seen a hundred pretty things,  
 And seen a hundred gay ;  
 But only think : I peep by night  
 And do not peep by day !’

---

O LADY Moon, your horns point to-  
     ward the east ;  
     Shine, be increased :  
 O Lady Moon, your horns point to-  
     ward the west ;  
     Wane, be at rest.

---

WHAT do the stars do  
 Up in the sky,  
 Higher than the wind can blow,  
 Or the clouds can fly ?

Each star in its own glory  
     Circles, circles still ;  
 As it was lit to shine and set,  
     And do its Maker’s will.

---

MOTHERLESS baby and babyless  
     mother,  
 Bring them together to love one  
     another.

CRIMSON curtains round my mother’s  
     bed,  
     Silken soft as may be ;  
 Cool white curtains round about my  
     bed,  
 For I am but a baby.

---

BABY lies so fast asleep  
 That we cannot wake her :  
 Will the Angels clad in white  
     Fly from heaven to take her ?

Baby lies so fast asleep  
 That no pain can grieve her ;  
 Put a snowdrop in her hand,  
     Kiss her once and leave her.

---

I KNOW a baby, such a baby,—  
     Round blue eyes and cheeks so  
     pink,  
 Such an elbow furrowed with dimples,  
     Such a wrist where creases sink.

‘Cuddle and love me, cuddle and  
     love me,’  
     Crowns the mouth of coral pink :  
 Oh the bald head, and oh the sweet  
     lips,  
 And oh the sleepy eyes that wink !

---

LULLABY, oh lullaby !  
 Flowers are closed and lambs are  
     sleeping ;  
     Lullaby, oh lullaby !  
 Stars are up, the moon is peeping ;  
     Lullaby, oh lullaby !  
 While the birds are silence keeping ;  
     (Lullaby, oh lullaby !)  
 Sleep, my baby, fall a-sleeping,  
     Lullaby, oh lullaby !

LIE a-bed,  
Sleepy head,  
Shut up eyes, bo-peep ;  
Till day-break  
Never wake :—  
Baby, sleep.

## AN ALPHABET

**A** is the Alphabet, A at its head ;  
**A** is an Antelope, agile to run.  
**B** is the Baker Boy bringing the  
bread,  
Or black Bear and brown Bear,  
both begging for bun.

**C** is a Cornflower come with the  
corn ;  
**C** is a Cat with a comical look.  
**D** is a dinner which Dahlias adorn ;  
**D** is a Duchess who dines with a  
Duke.

**E** is an elegant eloquent Earl ;  
**E** is an Egg whence an Eaglet  
emerges.  
**F** is a Falcon, with feathers to furl ;  
**F** is a Fountain of full foaming  
surges.

**G** is the Gander, the Gosling, the  
Goose ;  
**G** is a Garnet in girdle of gold.  
**H** is a Heartsease, harmonious of  
hues ;  
**H** is a huge Hammer, heavy to  
hold.

**I** is an Idler who idles on ice ;  
**I** am I—who will say I am not I ?  
**J** is a Jacinth, a jewel of price ;  
**J** is a Jay, full of joy in July

**K** is a King, or a Kaiser still higher ;  
**K** is a Kitten, or quaint Kangaroo.  
**L** is a Lute or a lovely-toned Lyre ;  
**L** is a Lily all laden with dew.

**M** is a Meadow where Meadowsweet  
blows ;  
**M** is a Mountain made dim by a  
mist.

**N** is a nut—in a nutshell it grows—  
Or a Nest full of Nightingales  
singing—oh list !

**O** is an Opal, with only one spark ;  
**O** is an Olive, with oil on its skin.  
**P** is a Pony, a pet in a park ;  
**P** is the Point of a Pen or a Pin.

**Q** is a Quail, quick-chirping at  
morn ;  
**Q** is a Quince quite ripe and near  
dropping.  
**R** is a Rose, rosy red on a thorn ;  
**R** is a red-breasted Robin come  
hopping.

**S** is a Snow-storm that sweeps o'er  
the Sea ;  
**S** is the Song that the swift  
Swallows sing.  
**T** is the Tea-table set out for Tea ;  
**T** is a Tiger with terrible spring.

**U**, the Umbrella, went up in a shower ;  
Or Unit is useful with ten to unite.  
**V** is a Violet veined in the flower ;  
**V** is a Viper of venomous bite.

**W** stands for the water-bred Whale—  
Stands for the wonderful Wax-  
work so gay.

**X**, or **XX**, or **XXX**, is ale,  
Or Policeman **X**, exercised day  
after day.

**Y** is a yellow Yacht, yellow its boat ;  
**Y** is the Yacca, the Yam, or the  
 Yew.

**Z** is a Zebra, zigzaggèd his coat,  
 Or Zebu, or Zoöphyte, seen at the  
 Zoo.

*Circa 1875.*

### HADRIAN'S DEATH-SONG TRANSLATED

SOUL rudderless, unbraced,  
 The body's friend and guest,  
 Whither away to-day ?  
 Unsupplied, pale, discased,  
 Dumb to thy wonted jest.

*16 March 1876.*

### MY MOUSE

A VENUS seems my Mouse  
 Come safe ashore from foaming  
 seas,  
 Which in a small way and at ease  
 Keeps house.

An Iris seems my Mouse,  
 Bright bow of that exhausted shower  
 Which made a world of sweet herbs  
 flower  
 And boughs.

A darling Mouse it is :—  
 Part hope not likely to take wing,  
 Part memory, part anything  
 You please.

Venus-cum-Iris Mouse,  
 From shifting tides set safe apart,  
 In no mere bottle, in my heart  
 Keep house.

*New Year 1877.*

### A POOR OLD DOG

PITY the sorrows of a poor old dog  
 Who wags his tail a-begging in  
 his need ;  
 Despise not even the sorrows of a  
 frog,  
 God's creature too, and that's  
 enough to plead ;  
 Spare puss who trusts us purring on  
 our hearth ;  
 Spare bunny, once so frisky and  
 so free ;  
 Spare all the harmless creatures of  
 the earth :  
 Spare, and be spared—or who  
 shall plead for thee ?

*Circa 1879.*

### TO WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

MY old admiration before I was  
 twenty  
 Is predilect still, now promoted to  
 se'enty.  
 My own demi-century plus an odd one  
 Some weight to my judgment  
 may fairly impart.  
 Accept this faint flash of a smoulder-  
 ing fun,  
 The fun of a heavy old heart.

*Spring 1882.*

### COUNTERBLAST ON PENNY TRUMPET

IF Mr. Bright retiring does not  
 please,  
 And Mr. Gladstone staying gives  
 offence,  
 What can man do which is not one  
 of these ?  
 Use your own common sense.

Yet he's a brave man who abjures  
his cause  
For conscience' sake : let bygones  
be bygones :  
Not *this* among the makers of our  
laws  
The least and last of Johns.

If all our bygones could be piled  
on shelves  
High out of reach of penny-line  
Tyrtæus !  
If only all of us could see ourselves  
As others see us !  
21 July 1882.

# MOLE AND EARTHWORM

A HANDY Mole, who plied no shovel  
To excavate his vaulted hovel,  
While hard at work met in mid-  
furrow  
An Earthworm boring out his burrow.  
Our Mole had dined, and must grow  
thinner  
Before he gulped a second dinner,  
And on no other terms cared he  
To meet a Worm of low degree.  
The Mole turned-on his blindest  
eye,  
Passing that base mechanic by.  
The Worm, intrenched in actual  
blindness,  
Ignored or kindness or unkindness.  
Each wrought his own exclusive  
tunnel,  
To reach his own exclusive funnel.

A plough, its flawless track pursuing,  
Involved them in one common ruin.  
Where now the mine and counter-  
mine,  
The dined-on and the one to dine ?

The impartial ploughshare of ex-  
tinction  
Annulled them all without distinction.  
*Before 1886.*

# TO MARY ROSSETTI

YOU were born in the Spring  
When the pretty birds sing  
In sunbeamy bowers :  
Then dress like a Fairy,  
Dear dumpling my Mary,  
In green and in flowers.  
*Circa 1887.*

# WHAT WILL IT BE ?

WHAT will it be, O my soul, what  
will it be,  
To touch the long-raced-for goal, to  
handle and see,  
To rest in the joy of joys, in the joy  
of the blest,  
To rest and revive and rejoice, to  
rejoice and to rest ?  
*Before 1893.*

# SPEECHLESS

LORD, Thou art fullness, I am  
emptiness :  
Yet hear my heart speak in its  
speechlessness,  
Extolling Thine unuttered loveliness.  
*Before 1893.*

# PLEADING

O LORD, I cannot plead my love of  
Thee :  
I plead Thy Love of me :—  
The shallow conduit hails the un-  
fathomed sea.  
*Before 1893.*



A SORROWFUL SIGH OF  
A PRISONER

LORD, comest Thou to me?  
My heart is cold and dead.  
Alas that such a heart should be  
The place to lay Thy head!

*Before 1893.*

SCARLET

'I SIT a queen, and am no widow,  
and shall see no sorrow.'  
Yea, Scarlet Woman, to-day, but not  
yea at all to-morrow.  
Scarlet Queen on a scarlet throne  
all to-day without sorrow,  
Bethink thee—to-day must end, there  
is no end of to-morrow.

*Before 1893.*

HOMEWARDS

LOVE builds a nest on earth and  
waits for rest,  
Love sends to heaven the warm  
heart from its breast,  
Looks to be blest and is already  
blest,  
And testifies, 'God's will is always  
best.'

*Before 1893.*

COUPLET

FAITH and Hope are wings to Love  
Silver wings to golden Dove.

*Before 1893.*

ITALIAN POEMS

VERSI

FIGLIA, la Madre disse,  
Guardati dall' Amore :  
È crudo, è traditore—  
Che vuoi saper di più ?  
Non fargli mai sperare  
D' entrare nel tuo petto,  
Chè chi gli dà ricetta  
Sempre tradito fu.

Colla sua benda al ciglio  
È un bel fanciullo, è vero :  
Ma sempre è menzognero,  
Ma sempre tradirà.  
Semplice tu se fidi  
Nel riso suo fallace ;  
Tu perderai la pace,  
Nè mai ritornerà.

Ma vedo—già sei stanca  
Del mio parlar prudente ;  
Già volgi nella mente  
Il quando, il come, e il chi.  
Odimi : i detti miei  
Già sai se son sinceri—  
E se son falsi o veri  
Saprai per prova un dì.

6 Ottobre 1849.

L'INCOGNITA

NOBIL rosa ancor non crebbe  
Senza spine in sullo stelo :  
Se vi fosse, allor sarebbe  
Atta immagine di te.  
È la luna in mezzo al cielo  
Bella è ver ma passeggiava :  
Passa ancor la primavera :—  
Ah l'immagin tua dov' è ?

*Circa 1850.*

## NIGELLA

PURPUREA rosa,  
Dolce, odorosa,  
È molto bella—  
Ma pur non è,  
O mia Nigella,  
Rival di te.

Donna nel velo,  
Fior sullo stelo,  
Ciascun l' amore  
Reclama a sè ;  
Ma passa il fiore—  
Tu resti a me.

*Circa 1850.*

## CHIESA E SIGNORE

## LA CHIESA

VOLA, preghiera, e digli  
Perchè Ti stai lontano ?  
Passeggi Tu frai gigli  
Portando rosa in mano ?  
Non Ti fui giglio e rosa  
Quando mi amasti Tu ?  
Rivolgiti alla sposa,  
O mio Signor Gesù.

## IL SIGNORE

Di te non mi scordai,  
Sposa mia dolce e mesta :  
Se Mi sei rosa il sai,  
Chè porto spine in testa.  
Ti diedi e core e vita,  
Me tutto Io diedi a te,  
Ed or ti porgo aita :  
Abbi fidanzanza in Me.

## LA CHIESA

Vola, preghiera, a Lui,  
E grida : Ah! pazienza !

Te voglio e non altrui,  
Te senza è tutto senza.  
Fragrante più di giglio  
E rosa a me sei Tu,  
Di Dio l' Eterno Figlio,  
O mio Signor Gesù.

*Circa 1860.*

IL ROSSEGGIAR DELL'  
ORIENTE

Canzoniere all' Amico lontano.

## I

## AMOR DORMENTE ?

ADDIO, diletto amico ;  
A me non lece amore,  
Chè già m' uccise il core  
Amato amante.  
Eppur per l' altra vita  
Consacro a te speranze ;  
Per questa, rimembranze  
Tante e poi tante.

*Dicembre 1862.*

## 2

## AMOR SI SVEGLIA ?

IN nuova primavera  
Rinasce il genio antico ;  
Amor t' insinua ' Spera '—  
Pur io nol dico.

S' ' Ama ' ti dice Amore,  
S' ei t' incoraggia, amico,  
Giurando ' È tuo quel core '—  
Pur io nol dico.

Anzi quel cor davvero  
Chi sa se valga un fico ?  
Lo credo, almen lo spero :  
Ma pur nol dico.

*Gennaio 1863.*

3

SI RIMANDA LA TOCCA-CALDAJA

LUNGI da me il pensiero  
 D' ereditar l' oggetto  
 Ch' una fiata in petto  
 Destar ti seppe amor.  
 Se più l' usar non vuoi,  
 Se pur fumar nol puoi,  
 Dolce ti sia dovere  
 Il conservarlo ognor.

*Circa 1864.*

4

BLUMINE RISPONDE

S' IO t' incontrassi nell' eterna pace,  
 Pace non più, per me saria  
 diletto;  
 S' io t' incontrassi in cerchio  
 maledetto,  
 Te più di me lamenterei verace.  
 Per te mia vita mezzo morta giace,  
 Per te le notti veglio e bagno il  
 letto:  
 Eppur di rivederti un dì m'  
 aspetto  
 In secol che riman, non che in  
 fugace.  
 E perciò 'Fuggi' io dico al tempo;  
 e omai  
 'Passa pur' dico al vanitoso  
 mondo.  
 Mentre mi sogno quel che dici e  
 fai  
 Ripeto in me, 'Doman sarà  
 giocondo,  
 Doman sarei'—ma s' ami tu lo  
 sai,  
 E se non ami a che mostrarti il  
 fondo?

*Gennaio 1867.*

5

Lassù fia caro il rivederci.

DOLCE cor mio perduto e non  
 perduto,  
 Dolce mia vita che mi lasci in  
 morte,  
 Amico e più che amico, ti saluto.  
 Ricordati di me; chè cieche o  
 corte  
 Fur le speranze mie, ma furon tue:  
 Non disprezzar questa mia dura  
 sorte.  
 Lascia ch' io dica, 'Le speranze su  
 Come le mie languiro in questo  
 inverno'—  
 Pur mi rassegnèrò, quel che fue fue  
 Lascia ch' io dica ancor, 'Con  
 lui discerno  
 Giorno che spunta da gelata sera,  
 Lungo cielo al dì là di brev  
 inferno,  
 Al dì là dell' inverno primavera.'

*Gennaio 1867.*

6

Non son io la rosa ma vi stetti appresso.

CASA felice ove più volte omai  
 Siede il mio ben parlando e anco  
 ridendo,  
 Donna felice che con lui sedend  
 Lo allegri pur con quanto dici e fa  
 Giardin felice dove passeggiavi  
 Pensando a lui, pensando e no  
 dicendo,—  
 Giorno felice fia quand' io m  
 rendo  
 Laddove passeggiando a lui pensai  
 Ma s' egli vi sarà quand' io  
 torno,  
 S' egli m' accoglie col suo dolo  
 riso,

Ogni uccelletto canterà dintorno,  
La rosa arrossirà nel vago viso :—  
Iddio ci dia in eternità quel giorno,  
Ci dia per quel giardino il  
paradiso.

*Aprile 1867.*

7

Lassuso il caro Fiore.

SE t' insegnasse Iddio  
Il proprio Amor così,  
Ti cederei, cor mio,  
Al caro Fiore.  
Il caro Fior ti chiama,  
'Fammi felice un dì';—  
Il caro Fior che t' ama  
Ti chiede amore.

Quel Fiore in paradiso  
Fiorisce ognor per te ;  
Sì, rivedrai quel viso,  
Sarai contento :  
Intorno al duol ch' è stato  
Domanderai 'Dov' è?'  
Chè passerà il passato  
In un momento.

Ed io per tanta vista  
In tutta eternità,  
Io qual Giovan Battista  
Loderò Dio :  
L' Amata tanto amata  
Tuo guiderdon sarà,  
E l' alma tua salvata  
Sarammi il mio.

*Aprile 1867.*

8

SAPESSI PURE

CHE fai lontan da me,  
Che fai, cor mio?  
Quel che facc' io  
È ch' ognor penso a te.

R

Pensando, a te sorrido,  
Sospiro a te :  
E tu lontan da me  
Tu pur sei fido?

*Maggio 1867.*

9

IDDIO C' ILLUMINI

QUANDO il tempo avverrà che parti-  
remo  
Ciascun di noi per separata via,  
Momento che verrà, momento es-  
tremo

Quando che fia :

Calcando l' uno inusitata traccia,  
Seguendo l' altro il solito suo corso,  
Non ci nasca in quel dì vergogna in  
faccia

Nè in sen rimorso.

Sia che tu vada pria forte soletto,  
O sia ch' io ti preceda in quel  
sentiero,  
Deh ricordiamci allor d' averci detto  
Pur sempre il vero.

Quanto t' amavo e quanto ! e non  
dovea

Esprimer quell' amor che ti  
portavo :

Più ma assai. più di quel che non  
dicea

Nel cuor ti amavo.

Più di felicità, più di speranza ;  
Di vita non dirò, chè è poca cosa :  
Dolce-amaro tu fosti in rimembranza  
A me gelosa.

Ma a me tu preferisti la virtude,  
La veritade, amico : e non saprai  
Chi amasti alfin ? Soltanto il fior si  
schiude

D' un sole ai rai.

2 G

Se più di me la Veritade amasti,  
Gesù fu quel tuo sconosciuto  
Amore :—

Gesù, che sconosciuto a lui parlasti,  
Vincigli il core.

*Maggio 1867.*

10

### AMICIZIA

Sirocchia son d' Amor.

VENGA Amicizia e sia la benvenuta,  
Venga, ma non perciò sen parta  
Amore :

Abitan l' uno e l' altra in gentil  
core

Che albergo ai pellegrini non rifiuta.  
Ancella questa docile e compiuta,

E quei tiranno no ma pio signore :  
Regni egli occulto nè si mostri  
fuore,

Essa si sveli in umiltà dovuta.

Oggi ed ancor doman per l' amicizia,  
E posdomani ancor se pur si vuole,  
Chè dolci cose apporta e non  
amare :

E venga poi, ma non con luna o  
sole,

Giorno d'amor, giorno di gran delizia,  
Giorno che spunta non per  
tramontare.

*Agosto 1867.*

11

Luscious and sorrowful.

UCCELLO delle rose e del dolore,  
Uccel d' amore,

Felice ed infelice, quel tuo canto  
È riso o pianto ?

Fido all' infido, tieni in freddo lido  
Spina per nido.

*Agosto 1867.*

12

O forza irresistibile  
Dell' umile preghiera.

CHE Ti darò, Gesù Signor mio  
buono ?

Ah quello ch' amo più, quello Ti  
dono :

Accettalo, Signor Gesù mio Dio,  
Il sol mio dolce amor, anzi il com-  
mio ;

Accettalo per Te, siati prezioso ;  
Accettalo per me, salva il mio  
sposo.

Non ho che lui, Signor, nol dis-  
prezzare,

Caro tienlo nel cor fra cose care.

Ricordati del dì che sulla croce  
Pregavi Iddio così, con flebil voce,

Con anelante cor : ' Questo che  
fanno,

Padre, perdona lor, ch' essi non  
sanno.'

Ei pur, Signor, non sa Quello che  
sdegna,

Ei pure T' amerà s' uno gl' insegna  
Se tutto quanto appar, che a Te non  
piace,

Fugace spuma in mar, nebbia fugace  
Successo o avversità, contento  
duolo,

Se tutto è vanità fuorchè Tu solo ;

Se chi non prega Te nel vuoto  
chiama ;

Se amore amor non è che Te non  
ama ;—

Dona Te stesso a noi, ricchi saremo  
Poi nega quanto vuoi, chè tutto  
avremo :

Di mel più 'dolce Tu, che ben  
basti ;

D' amore amabil più, Tu che  
amasti.

*Settembre 1867.*

13

## FINESTRA MIA ORIENTALE

[IN MALATTIA]

VOLGO la faccia verso l' oriente,  
Verso il meriggio, ove colui  
dimora :—

Ben fai che vivi ai lati dell' aurora ;  
Chi teco vive par felice gente.

Volgo verso di te l' occhio lan-  
guente,

Lo spirito che teme e spera  
ancora ;

Volgiti verso quella che ti onora,  
T' ama, ti brama, in core e colla  
mente.

Debole e stanca verso te mi volgo :  
Che sarà mai questo che sento,  
amico ?

Ogni cara memoria tua raccolgo,—  
Quanto dirti vorrei ! ma pur nol  
dico.

Lungi da te dei giorni me ne  
dolgo :

Fossimo insieme in bel paese  
aprico !

Fossimo insieme !

Che importerebbe

U' si facesse

Il nostro nido ?

Cielo sarebbe

Quasi quel lido.

Ah fossi teco,

Col cor ben certo

D' essere amato

Come vorrebbe !

Sì che il deserto

S' infiorirebbe.

Ottobre 1867.

14

## EPPURE ALLORA VENIVI

O TEMPO tardo e amaro !—

Quando verrai, cor mio,

Quando, ma quando ?

Siccome a me sei caro

Se cara a te foss' io,

Ti andrei cercando ?

Febbrajo 1868.

15

## PER PREFERENZA

FELICE la tua madre,

Le suore tue felici,

Che senton quanto dici,

Che vivono con te,

Che t' amano di dritto

D' amor contento e saggio :

Pur questo lor vantaggio

Non lo vorrei per me.

Quel grave aspetto tuo

Veder di quando in quando,

Frattanto andar pensando

' Un giorno riverrà ' ;

Ripeter nel mio core

(Qual rosa è senza spine ?)

' Ei sa che l' amo alfine—

M' ama egli ancor ? ' Chi sa ?

È questo assai più dolce

Dell' altro, al parer mio :

Essere in ver desio

O tutto o nulla <sup>1</sup> a te ;

Nè troppo vo' lagnarmi

Ch' or stai da me diviso,

Se un giorno in Paradiso

Festeggerai con me.

Marzo 1868.

<sup>1</sup> Ma no ; se non amante sìmi amico :  
Quel ch' io sarò per te non tel predico.

16

## OGGI

POSSIBIL non sarebbe  
 Ch' io non t' amassi, O Caro :  
 Chi mai si scorderebbe  
 Del proprio core ?  
 Se amaro il dolce fai,  
 Dolce mi fai l' amaro ;  
 Se qualche amor mi dai,  
 Ti do l' amore.

*Marzo 1868.*

17

Ti do l' addio,  
 Amico mio,  
 Per settimane  
 Che paion lunghe :  
 Ti raccomando  
 Di quando in quando  
 Circoli quadri,  
 Idee bislunghe.

*Marzo 1868.*

18

## RIPETIZIONE

CREDEA di rivederti e ancor ti  
 aspetto ;  
 Di giorno in giorno ognor ti vo  
 bramando :  
 Quando ti rivedrò, cor mio diletto,  
 Quando ma quando ?

Dissi e ridissi con perenne sete,  
 E lo ridico e vo' ridirlo ancora,  
 Qual usignol che canta e si ripete  
 Fino all' aurora.

*Giugno 1868.*

19

Amico e più che amico mio.

COR mio a cui si volge l' altro mio  
 core  
 Qual calamita al polo, e non ti  
 trova,  
 La nascita della mia vita nuova  
 Con pianto fu, con grida, e con  
 dolore.  
 Ma l' aspro duolo fummi precursore  
 Di speranza gentil che canta e  
 cova ;  
 Sì, chi non prova pena amor non  
 prova,  
 E quei non vive che non prova  
 amore.  
 O tu che in Dio mi sei, ma dopo  
 Iddio,  
 Tutta la terra mia ed assai de  
 cielo,  
 Pensa se non m' è duol disotto a  
 un velo  
 Parlarti e non ti dir mai che tu  
 bramo :—  
 Dillo tu stesso a te, dolce cor mio,  
 Se pur tu m' ami dillo a te ch' io  
 t' amo.

*Agosto 1868.*

20

Nostre volontà quieti  
 Virtù di carità.

VENTO gentil che verso il mezzodì  
 Soffiando vai, deh porta un mi  
 sospir,  
 Dicendo ad Un quel che non  
 debbo dir,  
 Con un sospir dicendogli così :  
 Quella che diede un 'No' volend  
 un 'Sì'



(Volendo e non volendo—a che ridir?)

Quella ti manda : È vanità il fiorir  
Di questa vita che meniam costì.

Odi che dice e piange : È vanità

Questo che nasce e muore amor  
mondan ;

Deh leva gli occhi, io gli occhi  
vo' levar,

Verso il reame dove non in van

Amasi Iddio quanto ognun  
possa amar

Ed il creato tutto in carità.

*Agosto 1868.*

## 2 I

Se così fosse.

Io più ti amai che non mi amasti  
tu :—

Amen, se così volle Iddio Signor ;

Amen, quantunque mi si spezzi il  
cor,

Signor Gesù.

Ma Tu che Ti ricordi e tutto sai,

Tu che moristi per virtù d' amor,

Nell' altro mondo donami quel cor

Che tanto amai.

*Agosto 1868.*

## L' UOMMIBATTO

O UOMMIBATTO,

Agil, giocondo,

Che ti sei fatto

Irsuto e tondo !

Deh non fuggire

Qual vagabondo,

Non disparire

Forando il mondo :

Pesa davvero

D' un emisfero

Non lieve il pondo.

1869.

## COR MIO

COR mio, cor mio,

Più non ti veggo, ma mi ram-  
mento

Del giorno spento,

Cor mio.

Pur ti ricordi del lungo amore,

Cor del mio core,

Cor mio ?

*Circa 1870.*

## ADRIANO

ANIMUCCIA, vagantuccia, morbi-  
duccia,

Oste del corpo e suora,

Ove or farai dimora ?

Palliduccia, irrigidita, svestituccia,

Non più scherzante or ora.

*16 Marzo 1876.*

## NINNA-NANNA

### I

[ANGELS AT THE FOOT]

ANGELI al capo, al piede ;

E qual ricciuto agnello

Dormir fra lor si vede

Il bel mio bambinello.

### 2

[LOVE ME, I LOVE YOU]

AMAMI, t' amo,

Figliolin mio :

Cantisi, suonisi,

Con tintinnio.

Mamma t' abbraccia,

Cor suo ti chiama ;

Suonisi, cantisi,

Ama chi t' ama.

3

[MY BABY HAS A FATHER AND  
A MOTHER]

E BABBO e mamma ha il nostro  
figliolino,  
Ricco bambino.  
Ma ne conosco un altro senza padre  
E senza madre—  
Il poverino !

4

[OUR LITTLE BABY FELL ASLEEP]

S' ADDORMENTÒ la nostra figliolina,  
Nè si risveglierà  
Per giorni e giorni assai sera o mat-  
tina.  
Ma poi si sveglierà,  
E con cara ridente bocchettina  
Ribacerà Mammà.

5

[KOOKOOROOKOO, KOOKOO-  
ROOKOO]

CUCCURUCÙ—cuccurucù—  
All' alba il gallo canta.  
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—  
Di rose il ciel s' ammantata.  
Cuccurucù—cuccurucù—  
Comincia un gorgheggiare.  
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—  
Risalta il sol dal mare.

6

[BABY CRY]

OHIBÒ piccina  
Tutto atterrita !  
La medicina  
Bever si de' :  
Uno, due, tre,  
Ed è finita.

7

[EIGHT O'CLOCK]

OTTO ore suonano—  
Picchia il postino :  
Ben cinque lettere  
Son per Papà ;

Una per te,  
Nulla per me ;  
E un bigliettino  
V' è per Mammà.

8

[BREAD AND MILK FOR BREAK-  
FAST]

NEL verno accanto al fuoco  
Mangio la mia minestra,  
E al pettirosso schiudo la finestra,  
Ch' ei pur ne vuole un poco.

[OVVERO]

S'affaccia un pettirosso alla fin-  
estra—  
Vieni vieni a gustar la mia minestra.  
Lana ben foderata io porto addosso,  
Ma tu non porti che un corpetto  
rosso.

9

[THERE'S SNOW ON THE FIELDS]

GRAN freddo è infuori, e dentro è  
freddo un poco :  
Quanto è grata una zuppa accanto  
al fuoco !  
Mi vesto di buon panno—  
Ma i poveri non hanno  
Zuppa da bere e fuoco a cui sedere,  
O tetto o panni in questo freddo  
intenso—  
Ah mi si stringe il cor mentre io ci-  
penso.

10

[I DUG AND DUG AMONGST  
THE SNOW]

SCAVAI la neve—sì che scavai—  
Ma fior nè foglia spuntava mai.  
Scavai la rena con ansia lena,  
Ma fior nè foglia spicca da rena.  
O vento aprico, con fiato lieve  
Sveglia i fioretti, sgela la neve!  
Ma non soffiare su quella rena:  
Chi soffia in rena perde la lena.

11

[YOUR BROTHER HAS A FALCON]

Sì che il fratello s' ha un falconcello,  
E tiene un fior la suora:  
Ma che, ma che riman per te,  
Il neonato or ora?  
Vo' farti cocchio del mio ginocchio,  
Minor mio figliolino:  
Da capo a piè ti stringo a me,  
Minimo piccino.

12

[HEAR WHAT THE MOURNFUL  
LINNETS SAY]

UDITE, si dolgono mesti fringuelli:—  
Bel nido facemmo per cari gemelli,  
Ma tre ragazzacci lo misero in stracci.  
Fuggì primavera, s'imbruna la sera,  
E tempo ci manca da fare un secondo  
Niduncolo tondo.

13

[A BABY'S CRADLE WITH NO  
BABY IN IT]

AHI culla vuota ed ahi sepolcro pieno  
Ove le smunte foglie autunno  
getta!

Lo spirto aspetta in paradiso ameno,  
Il corpo in terra aspetta.

14

[O WIND, WHY DO YOU NEVER  
REST?]

LUGUBRE e vagabondo in terra e in  
mare,  
O vento, O vento, a che non ti  
posare?  
Ci trai la pioggia fin dall' occidente,  
E la neve ci trai dal nord fremente.

15

[O WIND, WHERE HAVE YOU  
BEEN?]

'AURA dolcissima, ma donde siete?'  
'Dinfra le mambole—non lo sapete?  
Abbassi il viso ad adocchiar l' erbetta  
Chi vuol trovar l' ascosa mammoletta.  
La madreselva il dolce caldo aspetta:  
Tu addolci un freddo mondo, O  
mammoletta.'

16

[IF I WERE A QUEEN]

'FOSS' io regina,  
Tu re saresti:  
Davanti a te  
M' inchinerei.'  
'Ah foss' io re!  
Tu lo vedresti:  
Sì che regina  
Mi ti farei.'

17

[WHAT ARE HEAVY? SEA-SAND  
AND SORROW]

PESANO rena e pena:  
Oggi e doman son brevi:

La gioventude e un fior son cose  
lievi :

Ed han profondità  
Mar magno e magna verità.

18

[A TOADSTOOL COMES UP IN  
A NIGHT]

BASTA una notte a maturare il fungo ;  
Un secol vuol la quercia, e non par  
lungo :

Anzi il secolo breve e il vespro lungo,  
Chè quercia è quercia, e fungo è  
sempre fungo.

19

[IF A PIG WORE A WIG]

‘PORCO la zucca fitta in par-  
rucca! . . .

Che gli diresti mai?’

‘M’ inchinerei, l’ ossequierei—

“Ser Porco, come stai?”’

‘Ahi guai per caso mai

Se la coda andasse a male?’ . . .

‘Sta tranquillo—buon legale

Gli farebbe un codicillo.’

20

[HOPPING FROG, HOP HERE AND  
BE SEEN]

SALTA, ranocchio, e mostrati;

Non celo pietra in mano :

Merletto in testa e verde vesta,

Vattene salvo e sano.

Rospo lordo, deh non celarti :

Tutto il mondo può disprezzarti,

Ma mal non fai nè mal vo’ farti.

21

[WHERE INNOCENT BRIGHT-EYED  
DAISIES ARE]

SPUNTA la margherita

Qual astro in sullo stelo,

E l’ erbetta infiorita

Rassembra un verde cielo.

22

[A MOTHERLESS SOFT LAMBKIN]

AGNELLINA orfanellina

Giace in cima alla collina,

Fredda, sola, senza madre,

Senza madre ohimè !

Io sarotti e madre e padre,

Io sarò tua pastorella ;

Non tremar, diletta agnella,

Io ci penso a te.

23

[WHEN FISHES SET UMBRELLAS  
UP]

AMICO pesce, piover vorrà ;

Prendi l’ ombrello se vuoi star  
secco.

Ed ecco !

Domani senza fallo si vedrà

Lucertolon zerbino

Ripararsi dal sol coll’ ombrellino.

24

[A RING UPON HER FINGER]

SPOSA velata,

Inanellata,

Mite e sommessata :

Sposo rapito,

Insuperbito,

Accanto ad essa.

Amici, amori,  
Cantando a coro  
Davanti a loro  
Spargete fiori.

25

[THE HORSES OF THE SEA]

CAVALLI marittimi  
Urtansi in guerra,  
E meglio ci servono  
Quelli di terra.  
Questi pacifici  
Corrono o stanno ;  
Quei rotolandosi  
Spumando vanno.

26

[O SAILOR, COME ASHORE]

‘O MARINARO, che mi apporti tu?’  
‘Coralli rossi e bianchi tratti in su  
Dal mar profondo.  
Piante non son nè si scavar da mina:  
Minime creature in salsa brina  
Fecerne mondo.’

27

[THE ROSE WITH SUCH A BONNY  
BLUSH]

ARROSSISCE la rosa—e perchè mai ?  
A cagione del sol : ma, sol, che fai ?  
E tu, rosa, che t’ hai  
Che ti fai rosea sì se bene stai ?

28

[THE ROSE THAT BLUSHES ROSY  
RED]

LA rosa china il volto rosseggiato,  
E bene fà :  
Il giglio innalza il viso immacolato,  
E ben gli stà.

29

[OH FAIR TO SEE]

O CILIEGIA infiorita,  
La bianco-rivestita,  
Bella sei tu.  
O ciliegia infruttata,  
La verde-inghirlandata,  
La rosso-incoronata,  
Bella sei tu.

30

[GOOD-BYE IN FEAR, GOOD-BYE  
IN SORROW]

‘IN tema e in pena addio,  
Addio ma in van, tu sai ;  
Per sempre addio, cor mio.’  
‘E poi più mai.’  
‘Oggi e domani addio,  
Nel secolo de’ guai  
A tutto tempo addio.’  
‘E poi più mai.’

31

[BABY LIES SO FAST ASLEEP]

‘D’ UN sonno profondissimo  
Dorme la suora mia :  
Gli angeli bianchi aligeri  
Verranno a trarla via ?’  
‘In sonno profondissimo  
Calma e contenta giace :  
Un fiore in man lasciamole,  
Un bacio in fronte—e pace.’

32

[LULLABY OH LULLABY]

NINNA-NANNA, ninna-nanna,  
Giace e dorme l’ agnellina.  
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,  
Monna Luna s’ incammina.

Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,  
 Tace e dorme l' uccellino.  
 Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,  
 Dormi, dormi, o figliolino.  
 Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna.

33

[LIE A-BED]

CAPO che chinasi,  
 Occhi che chiudonsi—  
 A letto, a letto,  
 Sonnacchiosetto !  
 Dormi, carino,  
 Fino al mattino,—  
 Dormi, carino.

*Circa State 1878.*

## SOGNANDO

NE' sogni ti veggo,  
 Amante ed amico ;  
 Ai piedi ti seggo,  
 Ti tengo tuttor.  
 Nè chiedi nè chieggo,  
 Nè dici nè dico,  
 L' amore ab antico  
 Che scaldaci il cor.

Ah voce se avessi  
 Me stessa a scoprire—  
 Ah esprimer sapessi  
 L' angoscia e l' amor !  
 Ah almen se potessi  
 A lungo dormire,  
 Nè pianger nè dire,  
 Mirandoti ognor !

*Circa 1890.*

## NOTES BY W. M. ROSSETTI

*DEDICATORY SONNET*, p. lxxiii.—This sonnet formed the inscription or dedication of the volume published in 1881, *A Pageant and other Poems*. Christina Rossetti's books were, with few exceptions, dedicated to her mother; therefore the present inscription can very properly be removed from the position which it would occupy in order of date, and may form the dedication to the entire body of her poems.

*The Longer Poems*, p. i.—Christina Rossetti never wrote a poem which could rightly be called long. I have thought it desirable to begin the collection with those few compositions which have some moderate degree of length, not excluding devotional poems. I transgress, in this section, the order of date, for the purpose of putting *Goblin Market* foremost. It has always held a certain primacy amid Christina's poems, and the strict order of date would have brought to the front a poem whose merit by no means qualifies it for such a position—*Requiem*.

*Goblin Market*, p. i.—The original title of this poem was *A Peep at the Goblins—To M. F. R.*—i.e. Maria Francesca Rossetti. I have more than once heard Christina say that she did not mean anything profound by this fairy tale—it is not a moral apologue consistently carried out in detail. Still the incidents are such as to be at any rate suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them. I find at times that people do not see the central

point of the story, such as the authoress intended it: and she has expressed it too, but perhaps not with due emphasis. The foundation of the narrative is this: That the goblins tempt women to eat their luscious but uncanny fruits; that a first taste produces a rabid craving for a second taste; but that the second taste is never accorded, and, in default of it, the woman pines away and dies. Then comes the central point: Laura having tasted the fruits once, and being at death's door through inability to get a second taste, her sister Lizzie determines to save her at all hazards; so she goes to the goblins, refuses to eat their fruits, and beguiles them into forcing the fruits upon her with so much insistency that her face is all smeared and steeped with the juices; she gets Laura to kiss and suck these juices off her face, and Laura, having thus obtained the otherwise impossible second taste, rapidly recovers.—This poem was skilfully translated into Italian by our cousin, Teodorico Pietrocòla-Rossetti, under the title of *Il Mercato de' Folletti*, and was published in Florence (Pellas) in 1867. A cantata was made of the English words towards 1872 by Mr. Emanuel Aguilar.

*Maids heard the Goblins cry*, p. i.—Various designations are given to the goblins; they are 'goblin men, little men, merchant men, fruit-merchant men.' They certainly had tails, for one merchant was 'whisk-tailed,' and they went 'lashing their tails' when baffled. Then there is the passage, 'One like a wom-



bat prowled obtuse and furry,' etc. The authoress does not appear to represent her goblins as having the actual configuration of brute animals; it was Dante Rossetti who did that in his illustration to the poem (he allows human hands, however). I possess a copy of the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862, with marginal water-colour sketches by Christina—extending up to the poem *Spring* on p. 51 of that volume, but not farther. She draws several of the goblins,—all very slim agile figures in a close-fitting garb of blue; their faces, hands, and feet are sometimes human, sometimes brute-like, but of a scarcely definable type. The only exception is the 'parrot-voiced' goblin who cried 'Pretty goblin.' He is a true parrot (such as Christina could draw one). There are thirty-five such illustrations to *Goblin Market*—the simplest, as of fruit-branches, being the prettiest. When the special edition of *Goblin Market*, with designs by Mr. Laurence Housman, came out in 1893, Christina, although aware that the drawings possess superior artistic merit (a point, however, as to which she was no judge), did not exactly take to them as carrying out her own notion of her own goblins.

*For there is no friend like a sister*, etc., p. 8.—These lines are clearly connected with the original inscription of the poem, 'To M. F. R.' Christina, I have no doubt, had some particular occurrence in her mind, but what it was I know not. The two poems which immediately precede *Goblin Market* in date show a more than normal amount of melancholy and self-reproach; they are *L. E. L.* (p. 344) and *Ash Wednesday* (p. 217).

*Repining*, p. 9.—This poem was published in *The Germ*, 1850. It is, of all the poems by Christina Rossetti which appeared in that short-lived magazine, the only one which she did not afterwards reprint. No doubt it is far from being excellent; yet it cannot be called bad. In her MS. it is named *An Argument*, and is very considerably longer than in

*The Germ*, or hence in the present volume: the curtailment was a highly judicious act. The reader will readily perceive that this poem is to some extent modelled upon Parnell's *Hermit*. The moral, however, is different. Parnell aims to show that the dispensations of Providence, though often mysterious, are just. Christina's thesis might be summarized thus: Solitude is dreary, yet the life of man among his fellows may easily be drearier; therefore let not the solitary rebel.

*Three Nuns*, p. 12.—The second section of this poem was the first written, standing then as a separate composition. The united poem was inserted into the prose tale *Maude*, with the observation: 'Pray read the mottoes; put together, they form a most exquisite little song which the nuns sing in Italy.' *Maude* was written towards 1850—perhaps earlier. It was published in 1897, but the poem of *Three Nuns* was excluded from it on copyright grounds. The meaning of the mottoes runs thus: This heart sighs, and I know not wherefore. It may be sighing for love, but to me it says not so. Answer me, my heart, wherefore sighest thou? It answers: I want God—I sigh for Jesus.

*The Lowest Room*, p. 16.—The original title of this poem was *A Fight over the Body of Homer*—perhaps the better title of the two; it contains, in MS., various stanzas which were omitted in publication. This is the poem on which Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in a published letter to his sister, dated 1875, made the following remarks:—'A real taint, to some extent, of modern vicious style, derived from that same source [Mrs. Browning]—what might be called a falsetto muscularity—always seemed to me much too prominent in the long piece called *The Lowest Room*. This I think is now included for the first time, and I am sorry for it. . . . Everything in which this tone appears is utterly foreign to your primary impulses. . . . If I were you, I would rigidly keep guard on this

matter if you write in the future; and ultimately exclude from your writings everything (or almost everything) so tainted.' Christina, on receiving this letter, did not acquiesce in its purport, but later on seemed a little more inclined to do so. However, she always retained *The Lowest Room* in succeeding editions. To me it hardly appears that my brother's view can be pronounced correct. The real gist of *The Lowest Room*—i.e. the final acceptance, by the supposed speaker, of a subordinate and bedimmed position—is clearly the very reverse of 'falsetto muscularity'; if anything of that kind shows in the earlier part of the poem, it shows only to be waved aside.

*From House to Home*, p. 20.—I have always regarded this poem as one of my sister's most manifest masterpieces; though it is true that the opening of it would perhaps not have taken its present form had it not been for the precedent of Tennyson's *Palace of Art*. In this respect resemblances are obvious; but divergencies also are of the very essence of the poem. When a question arose as to publishing it (in the *Goblin Market* volume) my brother called attention to the point, penciling on the MS. note-book, 'This is so good it cannot be omitted; but could not something be done to make it less like *Palace of Art*?' Christina, however, did nothing at all in that direction; she substituted the present title for the original one, *Sorrow not as those who have no hope*. The essence of the poem is the severance of a human heart from the joys and the loves of earth, to centre in the joys and the loves of heaven; that it is in part a personal utterance is a fact too plain to need exposition. The three poems which in date immediately precede *From House to Home* are *The Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge*, *A Shadow of Dorothea*, and *By the Sea* (or rather a more personal and melancholy lyric poem from which *By the Sea* is extracted); next after *From House to Home* comes *New Year's*

*Eve*. If the reader cares to turn to these several poems, he will see in all of them evidence of a spirit sorely wrung, and clinging for dear life to a hope not of this world. As elucidating this phase of feeling, so prominent in many of Christina Rossetti's poems, I may refer to the *Memoir*, p. lii.

*The Prince's Progress*, p. 26.—The original nucleus of this poem is the dirge-song at its close—'Too late for love, too late for joy,' etc. This was written in 1861, and entitled *The Prince who arrived too late*. When Christina Rossetti was looking up, in 1865, the material for a fresh poetical volume, it was, I believe, my brother who suggested to her to turn the dirge into a narrative poem of some length. She adopted the suggestion—almost the only instance in which she wrote anything so as to meet directly the views of another person.

*A Royal Princess*, p. 35.—This poem was first printed in 1863, in a small volume named *Poems: an Offering to Lancashire*, which was got up 'for the relief of distress in the cotton-districts,' i.e. the 'Cotton Famine,' consequent upon the civil war in the United States. The volume contained contributions by other writers as well—George MacDonald, Allingham, Mary Howitt, Isa Craig, Lord Houghton, Locker-Lampson, Dante Rossetti, etc. That first printed form of the poem contains some variants from the present form, which is the same as in the *Prince's Progress* volume. It is rather singular that Christina should have written in October 1861, before any suggestion of the Cotton Famine began, a poem which, when she was soon afterwards asked to contribute something for this object, came in so markedly appropriate.

*Maiden-Song*, p. 38.—This simple light-hearted poem—a kind of cross between the tone of a fairy-tale and that of a nursery-song, each of them sweetened

into poetry—was deservedly something of a favourite with its authoress.

*The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children*, p. 41.—This title formed at first, in the volume of 1866, the motto of the poem, its title then being *Under the Rose*. The change was made in the re-edition of 1875. In a copy of that re-edition I find a note by Christina as follows: 'This was all fancy, but Mrs. [W. Bell] Scott afterwards told me of a somewhat similar fact.' It seems to me that the 'fancy' may have been partly guided by a leading incident in Dickens's *Bleak House*.

*The Months: A Pageant*, p. 48.—This *Pageant*, which was written at Seaford, has been acted more than once, at any rate in girls' schools. I remember an instance reported from America not long before the authoress's death. Indeed this was partly in her view in writing the poem.

#### OCTOBER.

Here comes my youngest sister looking dim  
And grim,  
With dismal ways.—p. 54.

Christina had a considerable spice of fun in her composition, as well as profound seriousness and rooted melancholy. She wrote these lines regarding November with a side-glance at herself—or at any rate quoted them sometimes as a telling self-description.

*A Ballad of Boding*, p. 55.—I give to this the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that it was published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881. The MSS. of Christina Rossetti's poems, up to 11 June 1866, are, with few exceptions, extant and dated in notebooks; but after that time, although several MSS. exist, few precise dates are traceable. Christina published the *Prince's Progress* volume in 1866—the *Pageant* volume in 1881. The reader will understand that, in saying 'before 1882'—in this instance, and the like in several others—I do not

imply that the composition was written shortly before 1882, for it may date at any time between June 1866 and 1881. I am seldom, in such cases, able to approximate the true date nearer than this.

*Monna Innominata*, p. 58.—To any one to whom it was granted to be behind the scenes of Christina Rossetti's life—and to how few was this granted—it is not merely probable but certain that this 'sonnet of sonnets' was a personal utterance—an intensely personal one. The introductory prose-note, about 'many a lady sharing her lover's poetic aptitude,' etc., is a blind—not an untruthful blind, for it alleges nothing that is not reasonable, and on the surface correct, but still a blind interposed to draw off attention from the writer in her proper person.

*Sonnet I*, p. 58.—Some English readers may like to see the mottoes of this sonnet and of its successors anglicized. I give them so here; the reader will observe for himself that in every instance the first sentence comes from Dante, and the second from Petrarca: 1. The day that they have said adieu to their sweet friends. Love, with how great a stress dost thou vanquish me to-day!—2. It was already the hour which turns back the desire. I recur to the time when I first saw thee.—3. Oh shades, empty save in semblance! An imaginary guide conducts her.—4. A small spark fosters a great flame. Every other thing, every thought, goes off, and love alone remains there with you.—5. Love, who exempts no loved one from loving. Love led me into such joyous hope.—6. Now canst thou comprehend the quantity of the loves which glows in me towards thee. I do not choose that Love should release me from such a tie.—7. Here always Springs and every fruit. Conversing with me, and I with him.—8. As if he were to say to God, 'I care for nought else.' I hope to find pity, and not only pardon.—9. O dignified and pure conscience!

Spirit more lit with burning virtues.—  
 10. With better course and with better  
 star. Life flees, and stays not an hour.—  
 11. Come after me, and leave folk to  
 talk. Relating the casualties of our life.  
 —12. Love, who speaks within my mind.  
 Love comes in the beautiful face of this  
 lady.—13. And we will direct our eyes  
 to the Primal Love. But I find a burden  
 to which my arms suffice not.—14. And  
 His will is our peace. Only with these  
 thoughts, with different locks.

*An Old-World Thicket*, p. 64.—This  
 poem bears a certain analogy to the  
 earlier one, *From House to Home*. I  
 think it sustains the comparison, though  
 pitched in a lower key. The essence of  
*From House to Home* is unison with the  
 Church Triumphant, through self-abnega-  
 tion. The essence of the *Old-World*  
*Thicket* might be expressed in a quotation  
 from St. Paul: 'The creature itself also  
 shall be delivered from the bondage of  
 corruption into the glorious liberty of the  
 children of God. For we know that the  
 whole creation groaneth and travaileth  
 in pain together until now.' The poem  
 does not, as I read it, relate to the  
 Church Triumphant, nor in a very express  
 form to the Church Militant; rather, at  
 the close of the poem, to the scheme of  
 redemption, and the flock of Christ.

*All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord*,  
 p. 68.—In 1897 Prebendary Glendinning  
 Nash, the Incumbent of Christ  
 Church, Woburn Square (the church fre-  
 quented by Christina Rossetti in all her  
 closing years), adapted a portion of this  
 poem for a harvest festival under the name  
*A Processional of Creation*. It was set  
 to music by Mr. Frank T. Lowden, and  
 sung at the evening service in that church,  
 21 October.

*Later Life*, p. 73.—The authoress  
 terms this 'a double sonnet of sonnets';  
 and I apprehend that the majority of it  
 must have been written with a definite  
 intention that its various constituent parts  
 should form one whole. Probably, when

the general framework was getting into  
 shape, two or three outlying sonnets were  
 pressed into the service.

*Sonnet 17*, 'Past certain cliffs,' etc.,  
 p. 78.—I consider that the beach of  
 Hastings and St. Leonard's is here in-  
 tended.

*Sonnet 18*, p. 79.—This sonnet is  
 altered—*i.e.* its octave is entirely different  
 —from the sonnet named *Cor Mio* (p.  
 389).

*Sonnet 21*, p. 79.—The reference to  
 foreign travel in this sonnet and its suc-  
 cessor relates to the year 1865, when  
 Christina, along with our mother, ac-  
 companied me to North Italy through  
 Switzerland.

*Sonnet 22*, 'Struck harmonies,' etc.,  
 p. 80.—I think this is spoken figu-  
 ratively—not as implying that my sister  
 actually wrote or even composed 'a  
 song' concerning the Alps. If she  
 composed any such, it seems to have  
 remained unpublished and untraced.

*Sonnet 25*, p. 81.—This sonnet,  
 being written before 1882, cannot relate  
 in part to the death of Dante Gabriel or  
 of our mother. So far as it relates to  
 any particular death, that of our sister  
 Maria may have been mainly in the  
 writer's thought—assuming (that is) that  
 the sonnet was written after November  
 1876.

*Sonnet 27*, p. 81.—This forecast of  
 death came singularly true; for, if one  
 had been writing a condensed account  
 of Christina Rossetti's last days and hours  
 in December 1894, one might have  
 described them very nearly in these terms.  
 Perhaps, however, few among her Chris-  
 tian readers will suppose that she 'may  
 have missed the goal at last.' The  
 reference to a 'saint rejoicing on her  
 bed' may glance at Maria.

*Juvenilia*, p. 82.—When I was  
 editing, soon after my sister's death,  
 those compositions of hers which were  
 published as *New Poems* in 1896, I put



at the end of the volume all the *Juvenilia*, i.e. all the poems written before she completed, on 5 December 1847, her seventeenth year. My object naturally was to set a certain stamp of inferiority on the *Juvenilia*, lest readers of that volume should suppose that these compositions were accepted or presented by me as standing on a footing of equality with work of a less immature age. In the present complete edition of the Poems I do not see that any such precaution can be necessary; and I therefore place the *Juvenilia* immediately after *The Longer Poems*, in the position which belongs to them according to order of date.

*To my Mother, on the Anniversary of her Birth*, p. 82.—These are the first verses that Christina ever produced; written as they were on 27 April 1842, she was then aged eleven years and a third. I presume that we were all a little surprised at her 'coming out' in this line, but have no express recollection of details. Our grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, who kept a private printing-press, printed the lines at once on a card; he afterwards, 1847, included them in the small volume named *Verses*. I need not say that the lines are regarded by me as in no sense approaching towards excellence. In the first of Christina's note-books these two quatrains appear, and the dates for later productions go on to 3 December 1845; and my mother has written on the flyleaf the following 'N.B.,' which may be worth quoting:—'These verses are truly and literally by my little daughter, who scrupulously rejected all assistance in her rhyming efforts, under the impression that in that case they would not be her own.' At some date—it may have been towards 1850—Christina took it into her head to make some little coloured illustrations to that printed volume of *Verses*; they are slight and amateurish—one might indeed say childish. There is a certain degree of fancy in them, however; and Dante Gabriel always considered that our sister, had she chosen to study and

take pains, might have done something as an artist. To the present small poem the emblem is two sprigs of heartsease. As I proceed I shall mention other devices, whenever they seem to present any point of interest. I may also mention here that there is another copy of the *Verses* illustrated with pencil designs by Dante Gabriel: they must have been made very soon after the booklet was printed—certainly before the autumn of 1848. The frontispiece is a very truthful profile likeness of Christina. Then follow designs to *The Ruined Cross* (which poem I have not thought good enough for reprinting here), *Tasso and Leonora*, *Lady Isabella*, and *The Dream*. This copy, neatly bound, was presented by our grandfather to the authoress: on the flyleaf he wrote some verses of his own to her, which had accompanied a bunch of red and white roses. The profile likeness of Christina, mentioned above, is the one whence was taken a tracing which has been reproduced in the published volume of *Letters by Dante G. Rossetti to William Allingham*.

*The Chinaman*, p. 82.—This trifling had not hitherto been printed among Christina's compositions, only in the book published in 1895—*Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his Family-letters, with a Memoir* by myself. The account which I there give of the verses is substantially as follows:—The year 1842 was the year of the Anglo-Chinese Opium War. I was told by one of my schoolmasters to make an original composition on the subject of China, and I think the composition had to be in verse. What I wrote I have totally forgotten. Christina saw me at work, and chose to enter the poetic lists. She produced the present lines.—So far as I can trace, this was quite, or very nearly, the first thing that Christina wrote in verse, after the two stanzas *To my Mother*. About three months before her death I happened to be talking to her as to this and other old family reminiscences, and I found her t

be under the impression that, by the time when she wrote *The Chinaman*, she had already done various other small things. Still, looking to known and probable dates, I cannot make it out to be so. Luckily the question is not of high importance to the literary world.

*Charity*, p. 84.—Christina's note to these lines in MS. is as follows: 'The foregoing verses are imitated from that beautiful little poem *Virtue* by George Herbert.'

*Love Ephemeral*, p. 84.—Device: the crescent moon, with a lunar (more like a solar) rainbow.

*Burial Anthem*, p. 84.—I have an impression that this was written in relation to the death of some young clergyman esteemed in our household; there was not any death in our immediate family about that date. Device: a sprig of blue and pink forget-me-not.

*Lines to my Grandfather*, p. 85.—This trifling performance is included among the *Juvenilia*, not because it is good, but because it has a personal flavour. My sister was at the time, I think, staying with some friends in the country not far from London. Two rhyme-words in the final stanza are obviously rhymes, not sense.

*The End of Time*, p. 87.—Device: a rose crossing a scythe; within the angle of the scythe, an hour-glass.

*Couplet*, p. 88.—This was an oral improvise. As I found occasion to introduce it into my Memoir of Dante Rossetti (1895), I may as well repeat the trifle here. Of course, the first line of the *Couplet* comes from a well-known old-fashioned song.

*Amore e Dovere*, p. 88.—There is a letter from Christina to Dante Gabriel, 1865, saying that the second stanza should be cut out. She assigns no reason, and I think best to leave it in: the reader can give it any consideration

he likes. In stanza 3 no rhyme is supplied to 'lagni'—seemingly an oversight.

*Mother and Child*, p. 88.—Mr. William Sharp published in *The Atlantic Monthly* for June 1895 a very sympathetic and interesting article, *Some Reminiscences of Christina Rossetti*. Here he says that on one occasion Dante Gabriel 'pointed out that Blake might have written the four verses called *Mother and Child*.' It would seem truer to say that Blake might have written a lyric of higher quality, embodying much the same conception. Device: some flowers of undefined genus, with sun-rays behind them.

*Mary Magdalene*, p. 89.—As the date shows, these simple and somewhat touching verses were written on 8 February 1846. On 30 March Christina wrote a different poem, *Divine and Human Pleading*—of a slightly 'preachy' kind, dissuading from the invocation of saints. Then, in the printed volume *Verses*, the two compositions, under the second title, were joined together. I am certain that the *Mary Magdalene* is better singly; and I so give it, omitting the *Divine and Human Pleading*.

*On the Death of a Cat*, p. 89.—This cat belonged to our aunt, Eliza Harriet Polidori. Device: a cat, in a rather sentimental attitude of languor, extending its right arm over a kitten. The cat is sandy and white, the kitten tabby.

*To Elizabeth Read, with some Postage-stamps for a Collection*, p. 90.—Miss Read was a young lady under the tuition of our sister Maria: she is now Mrs. Bull, widow of a leading physician in Hereford. Christina had a most cordial liking for her. The design to this trifle is a human personation of one of the stamps, bowing in the character of a 'humble servant,' and wearing the 'livery of red and black,' of a sort of mediæval cut.

*Love Defended*, p. 90.—Device: a

blind man (stanza 3) groping, with trees in the background.

*The Martyr*, p. 91.—Device: the soul of the martyr received into heaven by an angel. Between the angel's wings are a series of red and white curves, symbolizing (I suppose) the nine heavens, as in Dante.

*The Dying Man to his Betrothed*, p. 92.—Device: a rosebush intertwined by a snake.

*Gone for Ever*, p. 95.—This comes properly among the *Juvenilia*, according to the order of date. It was written before Christina was sixteen years of age, and was included in the privately printed *Verses*. Device: a moss-rose, not fully blown. When she was preparing the *Prince's Progress* volume, 1866, she considered the present lyric good enough to be published—and I suppose no one has questioned her discretion in this respect; and published it was, without any change of diction at all. I have felt some doubt whether, under these circumstances, I ought to include it among the *Juvenilia* or not. On the whole I have thought it best to do so; it gains rather than loses in interest by this observance of the order of date.

*The Time of Waiting*, p. 95.—Device: a damsel on a steep green slope, stretching her arms up longingly; from the sky a black-hooded woman, or spectre, addresses her with an action of admonition. This seems to be apposite chiefly to triplet 2.

*Tasso and Leonora*, p. 96.—Device: the shooting star in a female form.

*Love*, p. 97.—In February 1847 Christina wrote a weak affair, four stanzas, which she entitled *Praise of Love*. This is the final stanza (much superior to the others), and got at last published in *Time Flies*. It was not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893.

*Resurrection Eve*, p. 98.—Device: a white grave-cross, two palm-shrubs inter-

lacing above it; in the sky, crescent moon and star.

*The Dead City*, p. 99.—This was originally called *The City of Statues*. In point of length it ranks among *The Longer Poems*, but my arrangement retains it among the *Juvenilia*. The reader will, no doubt, perceive that it bears a certain relation to a story in *The Arabian Nights*, which was one of the comparatively few books that my sister, from a very early age, read frequently and with delight. Beyond this, taken along with what is obviously indicated in the poem itself, I cannot say whether any particular intention was present to her mind.

*Came and stole them from their master*, p. 99.—This has been remarked upon as a palpable make-rhyme, on the assumption that (if either of the two) the word ought to be 'mistress.' But there is no clear reason why the 'I' of the narrative should be a woman; a phrase a little further on strongly suggests the contrary—'Before me the birds had never seen a man.'

*Spring Quiet*, p. 103.—As in the case of *Gone for Ever*, this is a very early poem, included in the *Prince's Progress* volume.

*The Dream*, p. 104.—I am not sure whether the first short quatrain here printed is an integral portion of the poem, or rather a quotation from some other writer; I fancy the latter.

*Eleanor*, p. 105.—This may be a portrait from the life—I know not now of whom.

*Isidora*, p. 106.—Maturin's romance *Melmoth the Wanderer* is, I suppose, still known to several readers; it was republished some few years ago. Yet it may be as well to say, in explanation of the present poem, that Melmoth is a personage who has made a compact with the Devil, thereby securing an enormous length of life (say at least a century and



half), and the power of flitting at will from land to land. At the end of the term, Melmoth's soul is to be forfeited, unless he can meanwhile induce some one else to take the compact off his hands. Melmoth makes numerous efforts in this direction, but all abortive. One of his intended victims is a beautiful girl named Immalee, a child of Nature in an Indian island—a second Miranda. She becomes deeply enamoured of Melmoth, but resists his tamperings with her soul. She is finally identified as the daughter of a Spanish Grandee, and is then baptized as Isidora. At one point of the story she espouses Melmoth, and bears him a child. Christina's poem is her deathbed scene. The last line is truly a fine stroke of pathos and of effect; but it is not Christina's—it comes *verbatim* out of Maturin.

*Zara*, p. 107.—See the note on the poem *Look on this picture, and on This* (p. 323). In the novel of *Women*, Zara is the rival (she finally turns out to be the mother) of Eva; she is a shining leader of society. In the same year, 1847, when she wrote *Zara*, my sister wrote a separate composition, *Eva*. Its merit is but middling, and I do not reproduce it here. The device to *Zara* is a foxglove plant, with insects sucking its poison-honey.

*Immalee*, p. 108.—See the note (p. 166) on *Isidora*.

*Heart's Chill between*, p. 109.—This poem, called at first *The Last Hope*, was published under its present title in *The Athenæum*, 14 October 1848, being the first poem by Christina that got published. It was reprinted in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book, 1898. When I was compiling, in 1895, the volume named *New Poems*, I omitted this composition, thinking that, as it comes, in point of date, near the close of the *Juvenilia*, it ought to have been better than it is, and was hardly good enough for re-publication. The revival of the poem by Mr. Bell alters the conditions somewhat, so I now put it in.

*Lady Isabella*, p. 109.—This was Lady Isabella Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Wicklow; she was a pupil of my aunt, Charlotte Polidori. My sister entertained an ardent admiration for the loveliness of character and person which marked this young lady, who died of a decline at the age of eighteen or thereabouts.

*Night and Death*, p. 109.—It may reasonably be assumed that this lyric also has some reference to the death of Lady Isabella Howard.

*Death's Chill between*, p. 110.—See the preceding note upon *Heart's Chill between*. *Death's Chill between* was published in *The Athenæum*, 21 October 1848. It was originally named *Anne of Warwick*, and was intended to represent (in a rather 'young-ladyish' form) the dolorous emotions and flitting frenzy of Anne, when widowed of her youthful husband, the Prince of Wales, slain after the battle of Tewkesbury. If I remember right, this poem was offered to *The Athenæum* at the same time as *Heart's Chill between*; and my brother then substituted these titles for the original ones, so as to establish between the two a certain relation of contrast in similarity. At the present distance of date, it might perhaps have served better to preserve the first titles. My observations as to the exclusion of *Heart's Chill between* from the *New Poems* apply to this composition as well.

*The Lotus-Eaters*, p. 111.—Of course the sentiment here, as well as the title, comes to some considerable extent out of Tennyson.

*One Certainty*, p. 119.—This appears to have been written during a period of illness. In the MS. notebook, the next preceding poem is the sonnet *Rest*, in Christina's own handwriting (15 May); then the present sonnet and *Looking Forward* (8 June) are in our mother's handwriting. Again, on 31 August, *A Testimony* is in Maria's. Towards this period, and even before, Christina's state

of health gave rise to serious anxiety. See the *Memoir*, p. 1.

*Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*, p. 120.—This series of poems continues inclusively up to the verses *Looking back along life's trodden way*, p. 145. It consists of lyrics out of three volumes—those which are named respectively *Called to be Saints* (1881), *Time Flies* (1885), and *The Face of the Deep* (1892). *Called to be Saints*, though only published in 1881, was written (as shown by a letter from Christina dated in December 1880) 'several years' before that date—possibly 1877: therefore, in quoting poems from that volume, I give the date 'circa 1877.' The poems from all three volumes were reprinted in the *Verses* (1893) published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and then, for the first time, they were ordered under one general heading, as given above. In this instance, and in others ensuing later on, I, as a matter of course, follow the arrangement made by my sister, although it entails a certain interference with the order of date. The *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims* form the eighth and last (not the first) section of those which make up the volume *Verses*; I place it here first because one of its compositions dates as early as 2 March 1850. In the present complete edition, this point, rather than the sequence of sections in the previously issued volume, seems to govern the question. The eight sections (which will be found reproduced one by one as we proceed) take the following order in the *Verses*: (1) *Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord*; (2) *Christ our All in All*; (3) *Some Feasts and Fasts*; (4) *Gifts and Graces*; (5) *The World—Self-destruction*; (6) *Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity*; (7) *New Jerusalem and its Citizens*; (8) *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

*Her Seed: It shall bruise thy head*, p. 120. This poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*, and would, in ordinary course, stand dated by me 'before 1893.' But a note made in that book by Christina

shows that it was written before the date of our mother's death (which was in April 1886), so I name a date to correspond. The note in question runs: 'This one dearest mamma heard and liked.'

*Judge nothing before the time*, p. 121.—From *Time Flies*. The lines form the entry for 16 January, and appear to be intended to be read as a sequel to the entry for the 15th, which is on the text, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,' followed by a reflection that 'Adam's initial work of production (so far as we are told) was sin, death, hell, for himself and his posterity.'

*Man's life is but a working day*, p. 121.—This stanza is modified from the conclusion of the little poem *In Patience* (p. 238). In its present form it belongs to *Time Flies*.

*Marvel of marvels*, etc., p. 122.—It will be observed that this poem—like the *Passing Away*, at p. 191—is made up of one sole rhyme-sound; I think it holds nearly as high a rank among the authoress's verses. Its principal reference is, no doubt, to the deaths of her sister and mother.

*Afterward he repented, and went*, p. 123.—In *Time Flies* this lyric, which has an energetic personal tone, stands, without any title, as the entry for 11 May. I do not remember that any salient event of Christina's life was associated with that particular day, but may mention that 12 May was the birthday of Dante: Gabriel, and the prose entry for this latter day might, without much straining, be supposed to have a certain reference to him; he had died three years before *Time Flies* was published. It may be that the two entries were, in some degree, 'read together' in their author's mind, as having a relation to him.

*Are they not all Ministering Spirits*, p. 124.—The precise bearing of this poem becomes clearer when we observe its context in *The Face of the Deep*. It comes in after the text—'And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the

seven vials full of the last seven plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife.' The point specially raised in the prose comment, which leads up to the poem, is that this gracious and joyful message is delivered by one of those same angels who poured forth the plagues.

*Our life is long*, etc., p. 124.—This piece appeared in *Time Flies*, and I date it accordingly 'Before 1886.' But, on reference to p. 185, it will be seen that this is a modification of a much earlier poem, *How Long?*—dated 14 April 1856. As there are some fundamental differences between the two pieces, I print both here.

*Lord, what have I to offer?* etc., p. 124.—The reference to 'a heart-breaking loss' seems to indicate that these lines refer to some particular event in my sister's life. They appear in *Time Flies*, under the date 24 April; I do not identify any such event with that day, but can easily conceive a relation in the poem to some different day.

*Can I know it?*—*Nay*, p. 125.—This composition (from *The Face of the Deep*) forms a sort of meditation on the words addressed by Christ to the Church of Philadelphia. Amid those words comes the expression 'Thou hast a little strength.' On this the authoress comments (in prose)—'Why not much strength? God knoweth.' And soon afterwards the poem ensues.

*What is it Jesus saith unto the soul?* p. 127.—This sonnet, in its first form, was written on 2 March 1850. As printed, the octave is not much altered, but the sextett is entirely recast. The title used to be *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*. The first form of the sonnet appears printed in the prose tale *Maude*, published in 1897.

'*The sinner's own fault*,' etc., p. 128.—Stanza I is a modification of stanza 7 in *Margery* (p. 360).

*Who would wish back the saints*, etc., p. 129.—These three stanzas, now altered in metre and diction, formed at first a portion of the poem *Better so* (see p. 351).

*Where shall I find a white rose blowing?* p. 131.—This was first printed for a bazaar, held in June 1884, for the Boys' Home at Barnet, founded by Colonel Gillum. It was then named *Roses and Roses*.

*Now they desire a Better Country*, p. 132.—In a copy of *Time Flies*, Christina marked this as 'my first roundel.'

*These all wait upon Thee*, p. 132.—This stanza comes (with some verbal modifications) out of the poem *To what purpose is this Waste?* (see p. 305).

*Doeth well . . . doeth better*, p. 132.—I consider that this poem relates to Maria Francesca Rossetti, who had died in 1876. Christina often called her playfully 'Moon' or 'Moony.'

*Vanity of Vanities*, p. 133.—These stanzas, altered in diction, come out of the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342).

*Scarce tolerable Life, which all life long*, p. 133.—I date this sonnet 'circa 1884,' because I find the rough draft of it written upon a scrap of paper which bears the date 'Easter Eve 1884.'

*Alleluia! or Alas! my heart is crying*, p. 135.—This little poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*. It depends immediately upon those texts of *The Apocalypse* which purport that 'the kings of the earth' were 'saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon!' on the same occasion when 'much people in heaven' were 'saying, Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power unto the Lord our God.' From this consideration the authoress proceeds to reflect upon the alternative in her own spiritual state.

*The Flowers appear on the Earth*, p. 135.—Originally these two stanzas formed a part of the poem *I have a Message unto Thee*, p. 316. Their diction has been slightly altered, but only slightly.

*Bury Hope out of sight*, etc., p. 137.—In *Time Flies* this forms the entry for 5 December, which was the authoress's birthday. I assume that it was purposely inserted in relation to that anniversary,

and probably to the death of Charles Bagot Cayley on the same day.

*A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope*, p. 138.—Christina, in placing this poem in the *Verses* next after the last-named, seems to have intended that the two should be read together. The original framework of the *Churchyard Song* was quite different: it formed in *The Face of the Deep* part of the reflections upon the Apocalyptic text, 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,' etc.

*One woe is past*, etc., p. 138.—Naturally this poem belongs, in *The Face of the Deep*, to the same words in chap. ix. of *The Apocalypse*. As arranged in the *Verses*, I think Christina intended it to be read in association with the preceding two compositions.

*Thus I sat mourning*, etc., p. 139.—I have seen these two lines objected to as being somewhat ludicrously grotesque. Christina Rossetti did not think any part of the Bible ludicrous, and she found in the prophet Micah, 'I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.'

*Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock*, p. 147.—These verses were published in some magazine. I fancy it may have been one named *Aikin's Year*, with which Mary Howitt was connected. If so, I think the publication must be not later than 1854; and these would be (apart from the *Versi*, etc., see p. 446) the first verses by Christina which got into print after the cessation of *The Germ* in 1850.

*St. Elizabeth of Hungary*, p. 150.—I take it that this lyric received its immediate inspiration from the picture of like subject painted by James Collinson.

*A Harvest*, p. 153.—In the MS. notebook the title is *Annie*, and the poem extends to twenty stanzas. It then took the form of an address to 'Annie' by a husband or lover; possibly the poignantly pathetic lines of Edgar Poe, *For Annie*, were partly in my sister's mind. At some later date she numbered five out of the twenty stanzas, evidently contemplat-

ing to retain those five alone. I follow her lead, and supply a new title. The poem as it originally stood is, however, by no means a bad one.

*Sleep at Sea*, p. 154.—Was at first named *Something like Truth*.

*Some Feasts and Fasts*, p. 156.—This general heading continues up to the poem *Sunday before Advent* (p. 179).

*Embertide*, p. 163.—This poem (from *The Face of the Deep*) takes occasion from the passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not.' The prose comment on the passage contains the following: 'What we know with certainty of this beatified elder is not his name, but his Christ-likeness. As once his Master on earth, so now he in heaven saith, Weep not. The one and only aspect high or low need desire to be known by is Christ-likeness. Thus the saints are stamped, thereby they become recognizable.' And then follows the present poem.

*Mid-Lent*, p. 164.—This sonnet (from *Time Flies*) is obviously based in some degree upon the other sonnet, *Who have a Form of Godliness*, at p. 156, which was not published by the authoress.

*Monday in Holy Week*, p. 165.—This short piece was originally entitled *For under a Crucifix*. Written in 1853, it was first published in 1885, in *Time Flies*.

*Good Friday Morning*, p. 166.—This is the only piece which the authoress added to the volume *Verses*, consisting otherwise of reprints from previous volumes.

*Ascension Day*, p. 170.—To the last two lines in this poem (ending, 'Is that His cloud?') Christina wrote, in a copy of *Time Flies*, the note: 'An idea picked up, I cannot remember where.'

*There remaineth therefore a Rest*, p. 180.—In the notebook this composition numbers twelve stanzas; two of them, under the title *The Bourne*, were eventually published ('Underneath the growing grass,' etc.). The remaining ten were



not unworthy to pair with those two, but I think it best to use only five of them.

*Paradise*, p. 180.—The first title of this poem was *Easter Even*. In a printed copy of her *Poems*, wherein Christina made a few jottings, she has here noted 'Not a real dream.'

*Ye have forgotten the Exhortation*, p. 181.—Our father having died on 26 April 1854, it is not unnatural to think that this poem, dated 10 May 1854, bears some direct relation to that loss. There had been two other deaths in the family, April and December 1853—those of our maternal grandparents; to her grandfather especially Christina was most warmly attached. The title, *Ye have forgotten the Exhortation*, standing by itself, does not seem to be specially apposite to this poem. It becomes so when read with its context (*Hebrews* xii. 5, 6): 'And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.'

*The World*, p. 182.—This is one of Christina Rossetti's most energetic utterances, and a highly characteristic one. She had in fact a great horror of 'the world,' in the sense which that term bears in the New Testament; its power to blur all the great traits of character, to deaden all lofty aims, to clog all the impulses of the soul aspiring to unseen Truth. I recollect her once saying to me with marked emphasis, when my children were past their very earliest years, 'I hope they are not *worldly*.' It is an interesting observation of the great poet Leopardi, in one of his prose writings, that this sense of 'the world' appears to have been entirely unknown to antiquity, and to have formed one of the most potent messages of Jesus Christ.

In Christina's sonnet the opposite aspects of the world by day and by night may call for a little reflection. The primary sense (of course subsidiary to some spiritual meaning) appears to be that the world—like other devils, spectres, and hobgoblins—appears in *propria persona* in the night-hours only; it is then that she is recognized for the fiend she actually is.

*Zion Said*, p. 183.—As in a previous instance, the context makes this heading more significant,—*Isaiah* xlix. 13, 14: 'The Lord hath remembered his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.' This quotation appears in a condensed form in the poem *Christian and Jew* (p. 203).

*Hymn after Gabriele Rossetti*, p. 183.—In our father's volume of religious poems, *L'Arpa Evangelica* (1852), there is a composition named *Nell' Atto della Comunione*, in three parts. The third begins with the words—'T' amo, e fra dolci affanni,' and is the one which Christina here translates in two separate versions. The date which I give is conjectural; I assume the translation to have been made not long after our father's death. The copy of the *Arpa Evangelica* into which these verses were inserted is profusely illustrated with pencil-designs by Christina.

*I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills*, p. 184.—In MS. the title of this poem (viewed with predilection by its authoress) was *Now they desire a better Country*. It was printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864, as *Conference between Christ, the Saints, and the Soul* (this must, I think, have been a title proposed by the editor of the selection); in 1875, under its present title, it was included in Christina's collected *Poems*.

*A Christmas Carol for my Godchildren*, p. 187.—Christina, from time to time, acted as godmother to various children—

mostly, I think, children of poor people in the neighbourhood of Christ Church, Albany Street, Regent's Park. It may be worth noting that this carol was written not at Christmas time, but early in October; and in many instances a reference to dates would show that poems about festivals of the Church, or about seasons of the year, were written at dates by no means corresponding.

*After this the Judgment*, p. 188.—This composition in *terza rima*, written immediately after Christina Rossetti had completed her twenty-sixth year, was at first named *In Advent*, and it began with eight *terzine*, evidently prompted by a sense of the waning of early youth, and of melancholy at present and prospective conditions of life. These opening *terzine* had not any distinctly devotional character, and Christina, when she published her poem, excluded them. They are little or not at all less good than the rest of the composition, so I give them separately (p. 328), supplying a title—*Downcast*, for *In Advent* would no longer have any adequate application to them.

*Old and New Year Ditties*, p. 190.—It will be observed that these three lyrics were written in three several years. They used to be called—(1856) *The End of the Year*; (1858) *New Year's Eve*; (1860) *The Knell of the Year*. I have always regarded this last as the very summit and mountain-top of Christina's work. I will not say, nor indeed think, that nothing besides of hers is equal to it; but I venture to hold that, while she never wrote anything to transcend it in its own line, neither did any one else. The poem depends for its effect on nought save its feeling, sense, and sound; for the verses avoid regularity of the ordinary kind, and there is but one single rhyme throughout. The note is essentially one of triumph, though of triumph through the very grievousness of experience past and present. In framing the section of her *Devotional Poems*, 1875 and 1890,

Christina used to put these *Ditties* last, followed only by *Amen* and *The Lowest Place*. In reading them together, it is natural for her brother to reflect whether they indicate any special occurrences in the years to which they relate. I cannot remember that they do—cannot, for instance, say that in 1856 she was in any express sense 'stripped of favourite things she had'; however, the year 1860 (besides being the year of Dante Gabriel's marriage) was that in which Christina, a few days before she wrote *The Knell*, attained the age of thirty, and her thoughts as to the transit of years may have been more than ordinarily solemn. Her reference to her having 'won neither laurel nor bay' has also its interest. The bay began sprouting soon afterwards, with the appearance, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, of the poem *Up-hill*, which at once commanded a considerable share of public attention. It is quite possible that Christina—the most modest of poets, but by no means wanting in the self-consciousness of poetic faculty—thought in 1860 that the bay had been kept waiting quite long enough; and it is a fact that, between 24 July 1860, the date of *The Lambs of Westmoreland*, and 23 March 1861, the date of *Easter Even*, she wrote no verse whatever except this *Knell of the Year*.

*The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness*, p. 192.—Few things written by Christina contain more of her innermost self than this. In her volume *Verses* (published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) she took the first and last stanzas of this vehement utterance, and, altering the metre observably, and the diction not a little, she published them with the title, *Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive* (see p. 194). I think it only right to give the poem in full, as well as the extracted portion of it.

*Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity*, p. 193.—This series of poems continues up to the verses *For All*. For some

general remarks on the series see the note (p. 468) upon *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

*Earth has clear call of daily bells*, p. 193.—These two stanzas (first printed in *Time Flies*) are modified from two out of the eight which compose the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342). That poem has no connection with a stanza which bears the same title (p. 193).

*Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive*, p. 194.—See the note (p. 472) to *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness*.

*'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?'* p. 195.—These lines from *The Face of the Deep* relate to the text, 'There was no more sea,' after the creation of 'a new heaven and a new earth.' This text dwelt much in Christina's mind, and prompted various allusions in her writings.

*And there was no more Sea*, p. 195.—See the preceding note. Notwithstanding the title which the present piece bears in the volume *Verses*, it comes in *The Face of the Deep* in connection with a very different passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

*Roses on a brier*, p. 196.—Another variation on the same theme. It comes from *Time Flies*, being the entry (without any associated prose) for 9 June.

*Then whose shall those things be?* p. 197.—These lines, published in *Time Flies*, are extracted (with a slight verbal change) from *A Burden* (see p. 205).

*Parting after parting*, p. 200.—This little poem is made up from two separate stanzas first published in *Time Flies*. Stanza 1 forms the entry for 30 May; stanza 2 belongs to 10 August, and in *Time Flies* it relates to the parting and

reunion of two martyrs—Laurence and Pope Sixtus. Stanza 1 (ten lines) is condensed from fourteen lines, named *Good-bye*, which were written on 15 June 1858, and (as marked in the MS. note-book) 'in the train from Newcastle.' This implies that Christina was then 'parting' from her friends the Bell Scotts of Newcastle, and, her visit being then terminated, was returning home to London. It will thus be seen that the intensity of feeling here expressed really originated in a very slight occurrence—the occurrence itself merely served the poet's turn as a suggestion of highly serious matters. Stanza 2 used to be the conclusion of the lyric *Meeting*, written on 11 June 1864 (see p. 366).

*Advent*, p. 202.—In the annotated copy of her *Poems* Christina wrote against this one: 'Liked, I believe, at East Grinstead'—which one may well credit of the 'Wise Virgins' of that establishment. The greater part was set to music for Christina's funeral service at Christ Church, Woburn Square, by the organist, Mr. Lowden. I heard the music sung, and can testify to its beautiful and touching effect.

*Only Believe*, p. 205.—There were originally some other lines concluding this poem. They appear under the title *What good shall my Life do me?* (p. 215).

*New Jerusalem and its Citizens*, p. 206.—This heading (from the *Verses*, 1893) extends on to the poem just aforementioned, *What good shall my Life do me?*

*Who is this that cometh up not alone?* p. 207.—In a copy of *Time Flies* I find the following note by my sister: 'These lines were suggested by a sermon I heard from the Rev. Marshall Turner in Christ Church, Woburn Square.'

*Antipas*, p. 208.—This poem (which comes from *The Face of the Deep*) is founded upon those words which, in *The Apocalypse*, Christ speaks in addressing the church of Pergamos: 'Thou hast not denied my faith, even in those days



wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you.' And in the prose commentary Christina said: 'Men know him not now, how he lived or how he died. God alone knows him. Enough for blessed Antipas.'

*As cold waters to a thirsty soul*, etc., p. 209.—These three stanzas are partly identical with the five stanzas which compose *A Shadow of Dorothea* (p. 216). The present three, having been published by my sister, cannot here be omitted. I think it would be a pity to omit the other five, and they therefore figure in our pages as well.

'*Our Mothers*, etc.,' p. 214.—Christina evidently associates together, in the *New Jerusalem* series, this piece and the following one, as having a bearing personal to herself. They both come from *The Face of the Deep*, but from very different contexts there.

*Is it well with the Child?* p. 214.—This small lyric appeared in *Time Flies*, as being related to the martyrdom of St. Faith (supposed to be 'a noble maiden of Aquitain' in the third century). Her feast is 6 October. The verses formed originally a part of a longer composition named *Young Death*—date, 3 November 1865—and obviously relating to some very youthful person known to the authoress. Who this may have been I cannot now say. The portion of *Young Death* which was not included in the *Verses* has thus a certain personal interest. It is marked by a union of devoutness with quaint naïveté characteristic of Christina's verse in some moods; and, as I should not wish the lines to be totally lost, I give them separately under their proper date and title (see p. 244).

*What good shall my life do me?* p. 215.—See the note (p. 473) on *Only Believe*.

*A Shadow of Dorothea*, p. 216.—I do not find in the legend of St. Dorothea any incident corresponding closely to this. I understand that, in the poem,

the speaker is a human soul, not as confirmed in saintliness, appealing to the flower-bearing Angel of the legend, rather indeed to the Saviour Christ. See the note above on the poem *Cold Waters*, etc.

*For Henrietta Polydore*, p. 217.—Christina's title only says 'H. P.,' but the lines are certainly intended for Henrietta Polydore, our cousin (see note to p. 421). She was born in England and brought up a Roman Catholic. By a curious train of circumstances she was at that time, while still a child, in Salt Lake City with the Mormons. Her father recovered her thence, at a time when a military expedition was sent by the Federal Government to control affairs in the Territory of Utah; and the present lines were presumably written by Christina when she heard that her youthful cousin was about to re-embark for England.

*Ash Wednesday*, p. 217.—These verses—bearing no title beyond *Jesus, do I love Thee?*—were printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864. *Ash Wednesday* is the authoress's own title in her MS. notebook; I retain it, as the lines were evidently written towards the date of the fast. Preceding the last quatrain, the MS. gives six verses of ecstatic religious appeal which, as they were not printed, I with some hesitation omit.

*A Christmas Carol*, p. 217.—This was in the *Lyra Messianica*, 1865, named simply *Before the paling of the stars*. I retain my sister's own title.

*Christ our All in All*, p. 218.—This general heading continues up to the poem *The Chiefest among Ten Thousand* (p. 232). See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

*An exceeding bitter cry*, p. 218.—The phrase 'too late for rising from the dead' may ask a word of explanation. The poem comes from *The Face of the Deep* and relates to Christ's address to the Church of Sardis, in which occur the

ords, 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.'

*Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend* forget not, p. 226.—This poem is based on one which was written as far back as 26 August 1859, entitled *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*. The printed version is the shorter of the two, and is modified throughout, the closing lines being quite different.

'And now why tarriest thou?' p. 228. This was set to music (like *Advent*—the note on p. 473) by Mr. Frank Widen, and was sung at Christina's funeral service.

*Within the Veil*, p. 234.—From the *Lyra Messianica*. These verses would seem to refer to the recent death of some religious and cherished young friend; I cannot say who it was. In MS. the title of the verses is *One Day*.

*For a Mercy Received*, p. 235.—I am unable to say what the 'mercy' was.

*The Lowest Place*, p. 237.—As an expression of her permanent attitude of mind in the region of faith and hope, Christina evidently laid some stress on this little poem. She made it the concluding piece in the *Prince's Progress* volume, and also in the combined form of that volume with the *Goblin Market*. Hence I thought the second stanza of this poem the most appropriate thing that I could get inscribed upon her tombstone in 1895. In the sequence of compositions in her MS. notebook there is nothing to show any exceptional degree of devout absorption towards this date. *The Lowest Place* bears the same date as *The Ghost's Petition*, and comes immediately after the sunny playful-minded *Hidden Song*.

*Come unto Me*, p. 237.—This is the title given to the sonnet when first published in the *Lyra Eucharistica*; in MS. it stands as *Faint yet Pursuing*. It belongs to a knot of pieces showing some dejection and self-reproach, from 20 Janu-

ary to March 1864. The next following lyrics, *Patience* and *Easter*, have a less disconsolate tone. The other pieces in question are *Beauty is vain*, *What would I give? Who shall deliver me?*

*By the Waters of Babylon*, p. 239.—*In Captivity* was the first name of this forcible piece of *terza rima*.

*Despised and Rejected*, p. 241.—The point of view in this poem is rather remarkable. To some extent it pairs with the earlier composition (p. 147), *Behold I stand at the Door and Knock*. That, however, is obviously addressed to the prosperous and callous—the Dives who will not take count of Lazarus. Here we have a different situation. The supposed speaker is clearly a person who has been rather hardly treated by the world, and who determines that henceforth he will be left alone. The message addressed to him is: 'Whatever you exclude, through condonable disgust with the world and its ways, don't exclude Christ, nor yet the poor and suffering, who are Christ's representatives here.' Thus the poem bears some faint analogy (yet not the least resemblance) to *The Poet's Vow* of Mrs. Browning.

*Birds of Paradise*, p. 242.—This was printed in *Lyra Messianica*, under the title *Paradise in a Symbol*. In that volume the substituted title is appropriate, because another poem by Christina is there, named *Paradise in a Dream* ('Once in a dream I saw the flowers,' etc., see p. 180). For the present poem her own title in MS. was *Birds of Paradise*, which I prefer to retain here. In the MS. the last line of stanza one stands 'Windy-winged they came.' I reproduce the printed phrase, yet am sorry to lose the written one.

*I know you not*, p. 243.—From *Lyra Messianica*. Date conjectural.

*Young Death*, p. 244.—This is only a portion of the poem, as first written. See the note (p. 474) on *Is it well with the Child?* The gaps left by the extrac-

tion of the latter lyric are indicated here by asterisks.

*A Christmas Carol*, p. 246. This was first published in *Scribner's Monthly*, January 1872. It was republished, 1875, in the volume of united poems, being then made to open the series of Devotional Poems.

*Wrestling*, p. 247.—This is the introductory poem to Christina Rossetti's volume of prayers named *Annus Domini*, published by Messrs. James Parker and Co. in 1874. It had not hitherto been reproduced in any volume of her poems. In *Annus Domini* the composition stands untitled. I supply a title of my own. Stanza 7 was not printed in *Annus Domini*. Christina (as notified in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book) wrote it afterwards, and I find it in the copy which she inscribed to our mother for her birthday, 27 April 1874.

*The Master is come and calleth for Thee*, p. 248.—In the annotated copy of Christina's poems I find a note as follows: 'Dr. Littledale wanted a hymn—for a "Profession," I think; so I wrote this. But I think it was not adopted.'

*Saints and Angels*, p. 249.—On this poem Christina made a rather quaint note, personal to myself: 'William aptly remarked that this contains nothing about angels.'

*A Rose Plant in Jericho*, p. 250.—This sweet little poem has (it would seem) less of personal intensity of emotion than a reader might surmise from its terms. It stands annotated by Christina thus: 'Written once when Mr. Shipley wanted something' (the Rev. Orby Shipley, who edited more than one volume of devotional verse). The precise bearing of the title is not clear to me.

*Patience of Hope*, p. 250.—This comes from *The Children's Hymn-book*, edited by Mrs. Carey Brock, Bishop How, and others, and published by Messrs. Rivington. The date of publication appears to

be 1881, and I therefore date this poem 'circa 1880.' The words are set to be sung to the tune 'Grasmere' by Mr. Cameron W. H. Brock. In *The Children's Hymn-book* the composition was named *Thou art the same, and Thy Years shall not fail*: when it was reprinted in the volume of 1891, the present title was substituted.

*I will Arise*, p. 251.—To this and some other poems I give the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that they were published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881.

'Behold, a Shaking,' p. 255.—The first of these two sonnets is an evident recasting of the third sonnet in the series (p. 384), named *By Way of Remembrance*. I much prefer that third sonnet. It was not published by Christina herself, and I give both forms of the composition.

*Why?* p. 260.—It will be seen that this sonnet bears some relation to another sonnet, *If only* (p. 244), and to the lyric, *When my heart is vexed I will complain* (p. 248).

*If thou sayest*, etc., p. 261.—The whole context may as well be quoted here: 'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it?'

*A Sick Child's Meditation*, p. 263.—Comes from a little Church serial named *New and Old*.

*Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord*, p. 264.—This section of the *Verses* continues on to the sonnet, *Light of Light*. See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

*Gifts and Graces*, p. 270.—Continues on to the verses which begin, 'Lord, grant us grace to rest upon Thy word.'

*Christmas Carols*, p. 278.—It is reasonable to suppose that these three carols were written in different years.

I am not aware of the correct dates. The first carol was published (in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*) in 1887, and so I give a general date, 'circa 1887.'

*A Hope Carol*, p. 280.—I give here the date 'before 1889,' on the ground that the verses were first published in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*, 1888.

*Yea I have a Goodly Heritage*, p. 280.—As to the date, I only know that this was published in October 1890 (in *Atalanta*).

*Mary Magdalene and the other Mary: a Song for all Maries*, p. 281.—Perhaps the authoress meant something special by the sub-title. She may have been thinking of her mother's second name Mary, and her sister's name Maria.

*A Death of a First-born*, p. 282.—Relates to the death of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale.

*Faint yet Pursuing*, p. 282.—These sonnets were published in *Literary Opinion*, April 1892. Date conjectural.

*The World—Self-destruction*, p. 283.—This series of poems, lasting up to the lines which begin, 'Toll, bell, toll,' come from *The Face of the Deep*, reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893.

*All Things*, p. 285.—This short piece belongs also to *The Face of the Deep*. I have given a title, for clearness' sake. My sister did not reproduce the piece in the *Verses* of 1893. I cannot discern any reason for the omission, unless it be that she thought the lines too brief to hold their place in that volume.

*Heaven Overarches*, p. 286.—When I was looking through my sister's effects, shortly after her death in 1894, I found these verses rather roughly written in a little memorandum-book. Their date must, I think, be as late as 1893. Except *Good Friday Morning* (p. 166) and *Sleeping at Last* (p. 417), they appear to be about the last lines produced by my sister.

*A Portrait*, p. 286.—The reader will

observe that the second of these two sonnets belongs, in point of date, to the *Juvenilia*. It was written for the death of Lady Isabella Howard. See the note (p. 467) upon *Lady Isabella*. The sonnet which here stands first was meant for Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, and was so entitled; Christina had before then read with interest Kingsley's drama, *The Saint's Tragedy*. The name *A Portrait* is intended, I assume, to reidentify the brace of sonnets with Lady Isabella Howard. I question, however, whether some of the stronger expressions in the first sonnet are wholly applicable to this young lady.

*Three Stages*, p. 288.—This triple poem was written, as the reader will perceive, at three very different dates, ranging between 1848 and 1854. The first section was originally named *Lines in Memory of Schiller's Der Pilgrim*; but, when published by my sister, it received the altered title, *A Pause of Thought*. She did not see fit to publish sections 2 and 3; not, I am convinced, that she thought them below the mark, but because of their intimately personal character. I published them in the volume of *New Poems*, keeping them separate, and naming No. 3 *Restive*. As I mentioned at that time, I think the proper ultimate treatment for the three sections is to keep them united, as Christina herself united them in MS.; and this I now effect.

*Lady Montrevor*, p. 290.—This sonnet applies to a personage in Maturin's novel, *The Wild Irish Boy*. Christina, as well as her brothers, was in early youth very fond of Maturin's novels, and more than one of her poems relate to these. Lady Montrevor is possibly now almost forgotten. She is a brilliant woman of the world who fascinates 'the Wild Irish Boy,' and leads both him and herself into grave dilemmas.

*Song* ('When I am dead, my dearest'), p. 290.—This celebrated lyric (which has perhaps been oftener quoted, and



certainly oftener set to music, than anything else by Christina Rossetti) was, except for one composition, her only production in December 1848. The other, so far from being of any the like calibre, is so indifferent that it has never been published: it bears the rather odd title, *What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her*—and its date is 7 December 1848. The next poem after *When I am dead* is the *Symbols*, 7 January 1849 (p. 116). The reader may perhaps not object to see here a few particulars about musical settings of Christina's works. *Goblin Market* and *Songs in a Cornfield* are referred to in other notes; also some composed by Mr. Lowden. I myself possess musical settings as follows, but no doubt there are several others. *When I am Dead*, by Mary Carmichael and ten other composers; five from *Singsong*, by Mary Carmichael, and four by Schlessinger; *Up-hill*, four settings; *A Birthday* and *Bird Raptures*, two each; *Hope is like a Harebell*; *First Spring Day*; *If*; *The Skylark*; *Dreamland*; *A Summer Wish*; *Echo*, by Virginia Gabriel; *Yea or Nay*; *I bore with Thee*; *Advent*; *Two Doves*.

*An End*, p. 292.—This is one of the poems published in *The Germ*, 1850. The others were—*Dreamland*, *A Pause of Thought*, *Song* (Oh roses for the flush of youth), *A Testimony*, *Repining*, and *Sweet Death*.

*Dream land*, p. 292.—Christina made three coloured designs to this lyric. In the first we see the 'She' of the poem journeying to her bourne. She is a rather sepulchral-looking, white-clad figure, holding a cross; the 'single star' and the 'water-springs' are apparent, also a steep slope of purplish hill which she is leaving behind. The second design gives the nightingale singing on a thorny rose-bough. In the third, 'She' is rising and ascending winged; her pinions are golden, of butterfly-form.

*Looking Forward*, p. 293.—The tone of this lyric suggests that it was written

in expectation of seemingly imminent death; in the MS. notebook it stands in my mother's handwriting (quite contrary to wont), and so does another poem dated in the same month, *One Certain* (p. 119).

*Queen Rose*, p. 295.—Christina sang often—possibly too often—the praises of the rose; she regarded it not merely in its own beauty, but as the symbol of love, whether construed as deep human affection or as union with the Divine. The lily stood with her (as with so many another) for faith.

*Endurance*, p. 297.—This sonnet does not appear in Christina's MS. notebook. It was inserted into the prose tale *Maude* (published in 1897) as being a morbid effusion of 'Maude.' As the MS. of that tale was done in 1850, I presume that the sonnet may have been written towards that date. It is not very good but could scarcely (I think) be omitted here. The same remarks (save as to demerit) apply to the next ensuing lyric *Withering*. In both cases the titles are mine.

*Twilight Calm*, p. 297.—This poem looks like a direct transcript from nature, as if the authoress had observed the particular features of the scene one by one, and had noted them down at the moment. And yet it cannot have been so; unless indeed one supposes that it was mainly written at one season, and only concluded at another. Its recorded date, 7 February, is inconsistent with several of the details described—beech leafy wood, lilies and roses shutting, etc.

*Is and Was*, p. 300.—The last line of this poem, 'Doing all from self-respect,' may be worth a moment's comment. Much about the time when the poem was written, a lady told my sister that the latter seemed to 'do all from self-respect,' not from fellow-feeling with others, or from kindly consideration for them. Christina mentioned the remark with an admission that it hit a blot in

character, in which a certain amount of reserve and distance, not remote from *l'artiste*, was certainly at that date perceptible. She laid the hint to heart, and, I think, never forgot it. A like phrase appears in a poem of much later date, July 1865, *Enrica* (see p. 377).

*Annie*, p. 301.—Christina, the most scrupulous of women and of writers, put in this lyric a note—‘query *Borrows*.’ It meant that there may, or possibly may not, be here some unconscious reminiscences from other poems.

*Books in the Running Brooks*, p. 303.—This, in MS., stands entitled *After a Picture in the Portland Gallery*. What picture may have been I cannot now say; not one by Dante Rossetti, who did not exhibit in that gallery after 1850.

*To what purpose is this Waste?* p. 302.—The reader will observe, on p. 302, the composition, *These all wait on Thee*, extracted with modified diction from the present poem.

*Vext of Kin*, p. 307.—This might appear to be a personal address to some very dear relative; if so, it can only be intended for the ‘Lalla’ named on p. 307, for Christina had no other relative younger than herself. But perhaps no personal reference is really intended.

*For Rosaline’s Album*, p. 307.—Rosaline was Miss Orme, who, not long after the date of these verses, married Professor David Masson, now King’s Historiographer for Scotland. These sepulchral verses are perhaps not quite the staple of a very youthful (and I might add charming) lady’s album.

*Dead before Death*, p. 313.—I am unable to say what gave rise to this very intense and denunciatory outpouring. It was written three days before the horess completed her twenty-fourth year; and possibly it may be regarded as an address to herself—not indeed as she was, or even supposed herself to be, as she might become if ‘*Amor Mundi*’

were to supersede the aspiration after divine grace.

*The First Spring Day*, p. 314.—In a copy of her *Poems*, 1875, Christina made the following note: ‘I was walking in the Outer Circle, Regent’s Park, when the impulse or thought came.’

*My Dream*, p. 315.—If anything were needed to show the exceptional turn of mind of Christina Rossetti—the odd freakishness which flecked the extreme and almost excessive seriousness of her thought—the present poem might serve for the purpose. It looks like the narration of a true dream; and nothing seems as if it could account for so eccentric a train of notions, except that she in fact dreamed them. And yet she did not; for, in a copy of her collected edition of 1875, I find that she has marked the piece ‘not a real dream.’ As it was not a real dream, and she chose nevertheless to give it verbal form, one seeks for a meaning in it, and I for one cannot find any that bears development. She certainly liked the poem, and in this I and others quite agreed with her; I possess a little bit of paper, containing three illustrations of her own to *The Dream*, and bearing the date 16 March ’55. There is (1) the dreamer slumbering under a tree, from which the monarch crocodile dangles; (2) the crocodile sleeping with ‘unstrung claw,’ as the ‘winged vessel’ approaches; and (3) the crocodile as he reared up in front of the vessel, and ‘wrung his hands.’ I may add that, for some reason as untraceable perhaps as that which guided Christina in the writing of *The Dream*, Dante Gabriel bestowed the name of ‘the prudent crocodile’ (from this poem) upon Mr. William Morris, and the nickname found favour with some other members of our circle. Perhaps it will one day turn up in correspondence, and will remain unfathomable to persons who do not read this note.

*I have a Message unto Thee*, p. 316.—After the sixth stanza of this poem came

two other stanzas here omitted. My sister used them, with slight verbal alterations, as a separate composition, *The Flowers appear on the Earth* (see p. 135).

*To the End*, p. 319.—The last quatrain of this poem seems to present a certain reminiscence (yet far from being a plagiarism) from Dante Rossetti's early achievement, *The Blessed Damozel*.

*Shut Out*, p. 320.—In MS. this piece bears the too significant title, *What happened to Me*.

*Acme*, p. 323.—In point of sentiment, not at all in the form of treatment, this sonnet bears some analogy to one by Dante Rossetti, *A Superscription*. The latter was written in January 1869, long after Christina's sonnet: the resemblance must be fortuitous.

*Look on this Picture and on This*, p. 323.—In my sister's MS. this poem is a rather long one, forty-six triplets; I have reduced it to twenty-three—omitting those passages which appear to me to be either in themselves inferior, or adapted rather for spinning out the theme than intensifying it. Longer or shorter, the poem is perhaps hardly up to the writer's mark; but there is a degree of peculiarity about it which disinclines me to drop it out. Were it not for the name 'Eva,' I should be embarrassed to guess what could have directed my sister's pen to so singular a subject and treatment; but that name satisfies me that she was here recurring to a favourite romancist of her girlhood, Maturin (see note to p. 107). In Maturin's novel entitled *Women* there is a personage Eva, and a situation which must certainly have prompted the present poem.

*Downcast*, p. 328.—This is in strictness a fragment, and its full rhyme-system, as *terza rima*, is necessarily uncompleted. See the note (p. 472) to *After this the Judgment*.

*A Triad*, p. 329.—This very fine sonnet was published in the volume of

1862, *Goblin Market and other Poems*, but was omitted in subsequent issues. I presume that my sister, with overstrained scrupulosity, considered its moral tone to be somewhat open to exception. In such a view I by no means agree, and I therefore reproduce it here, as I did in the volume of *New Poems*, 1896.

*Love from the North*, p. 329.—Was originally named *In the Days of the Sea-Kings*, which is perhaps the better title of the two.

*In an Artist's Studio*, p. 330.—The reference is apparently to our brother's studio, and to his constantly-repeated heads of the lady whom he afterwards married, Miss Siddal.

*In the Round Tower at Jhansi*, p. 332.—On hearing this tragic episode of the Indian Mutiny, my sister composed the poem, which I always rate among her masterpieces; and she published it in the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862. In a subsequent reissue she added the following note: 'I retain this little poem, not as historically accurate, but as written and published before I heard the supposed facts of its first verse contradicted.' In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume in which Christina drew a few coloured designs, she has put a head- and tail-piece to the Jhansi poem. The former is a flag displayed—pink field, with a device of two caressing doves. The latter is the same flag, drooping from its broken staff, and seen on the reverse side, besmeared with blood.

*A Nightmare (Fragment)*, p. 333.—In my sister's note-book this composition begins on p. 25, and ends on p. 27; the intermediate leaf has been torn out. Mere scrap as it is, I should be sorry to lose it quite.

*For One Sake*, p. 333.—The precise bearing of this sonnet may admit of some uncertainty. It would seem that some woman known to the authoress (I cannot at all say who it was) had died, and was regarded by her as now a saint in heaven.



the 'imperishable bride' of Christ. Or possibly the 'imperishable bride' is the Christian Church in the abstract. The phrase as to 'wars and rumours of your wars' seems to be anything but germane to such a theme. The war of the Indian Mutiny was then raging; and it may be that the writer intended to express the opinion—which she certainly entertained—that any such turmoil is a very little thing, in comparison with the question whether the human soul is to be saved or lost to all eternity.

*Memory*, p. 334.—It will be observed that this remarkable utterance is made up of two separate poems, written at a rather wide interval of dates. No. 1 was originally named *A Blank*; No. 2, *A Memory*.

*A Birthday*, p. 335.—I have more than once been asked whether I could account for the outburst of exuberant joy evidenced in this celebrated lyric; I am unable to do so. Its correct sequence is shown in these pages, between Part I. of *Memory* and *An Apple Gathering*—poems neither of which is at all in the like strain. It is, of course, possible to infer that the *Birthday* is a mere piece of poetical composition, not testifying to any corresponding emotion of its author at the time; but I am hardly prepared to think that.—In some illustrated comic paper a parody of the lyric was printed; it amused Christina, who pasted it into a copy of her *Poems*, 1875. It may perhaps amuse other people, and I give it here:—

#### AN UNEXPECTED PLEASURE

(After Christina G. Rossetti)

My heart is like one asked to dine  
Whose evening dress is up the spout;  
My heart is like a man would be  
Whose raging tooth is half pulled out.  
My heart is like a howling swell  
Who boggles on his upper C;  
My heart is madder than all these—  
My wife's mamma has come to tea.

Raise me a bump upon my crown,  
Bang it till green in purple dies;  
Feed me on bombs and fulminates,  
And turncocks of a medium size.

R

Work me a suit in crimson apes  
And sky-blue beetles on the spree;  
Because the mother of my wife  
Has come—and means to stay with me.

*Winter, My Secret*, p. 336.—This was at first named *Nonsense*; but, if there is method in some madness, there may be nous in some nonsense.

*My Friend*, p. 336.—One can scarcely doubt that this refers to the death of some person known to and beloved by the writer. Perhaps at one time I knew who it was, but do not now.

*Maude Clare*, p. 337.—This poem was originally much longer than it is now. It numbered forty-three stanzas or thereabouts (there is a gap in the MS. note-book just before its close). It was first published in *Once a Week*, 5 November 1859, with a design by Millais—far from being among his best. There were then sixteen stanzas—now only twelve. I am not sure that the omission of the opening stanza was an advantage; here it is:—

The fields were white with lily-buds,  
White gleamed the lilled beck;  
Each mated pigeon plumed the pomp  
Of his metallic neck.

*Autumn*, p. 337.—Was at first entitled *Ding Dong Bell*.

*Up-hill*, p. 339.—This was, I believe, the first poem by Christina which excited marked attention; it was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, and was at once accepted by poetical readers as an observable thing. The like had, in its small degree, been the case with the verses printed in *The Germ*; but then *The Germ* had next to no circulation.

*At Home*, p. 339.—Was originally called *After the Picnic*, and was written (as a pencil-note by the authoress says) 'after a Newcastle picnic,' which must no doubt have been held in company with the Bell Scotts. This, however, was a trivial title, to which my brother raised some objection. He considered

2 I

this to be about the best of all Christina's poems, and was not (I conceive) far wrong, though there are others equally good. It will be perceived that 29 June 1858 was a red-letter day in Christina's poetic calendar. She produced on that day (or else she simply completed) *Up-hill*, *At Home*, and the ensuing *To-day and To-morrow*, which, though left unpublished during her lifetime, appears to me only a trifle less masterly than the other two. She illustrated *At Home* with two coloured designs, which, inefficiently done as they are, carry a certain imaginative suggestion with them. No. 1 shows the blanched form of the ghost in a sky lit with cresset flames. On one side the sky is bright blue, the flames golden; on the other side, dark twilight grey, and the flames red. No. 2 is the globe of the earth, rudely lined for latitude and longitude. The equator divides it into a green northern and a grey-purple southern hemisphere. Over the former flare sunbeams in a blue sky; below the latter the firmament is dimly dark, and the pallid moon grey towards extinction.

*The Convent Threshold*, p. 340.—The authoress seems to have combined in this impassioned poem something of the idea of an Héloïse and Abélard with something of the idea of a Juliet and Romeo. The opening lines, *There's blood between us*, etc., clearly point to a family feud, as of the Capulets and Montagues; but it is difficult to believe that the passage beginning 'A spirit with transfigured face' would have been introduced unless the writer had had in her mind some personage, such as Abélard, of exceptionally subtle and searching intellect. It may be observed moreover that (as with the letters of Héloïse to Abélard) this seems to be intended for a written outpouring, not a spoken one: see the line on p. 342, 'I cannot write the words I said.'

*Yet a Little While*, p. 342.—Stanzas 3, 4, 7, and 8 are used, with modifica-

tions, in other poems; the first pair in *Vanity of Vanities* (p. 133), and the second pair in the opening lyric (p. 193) of *Divers Worlds, Time and Eternity*. Nevertheless I have thought it undesirable to cut them out of the present poem.

*Father and Lover*, p. 343.—These two songs—the first spoken by the Father, and the second by the Lover—come from a prose fairy-tale named *Hero*, which was printed in the volume entitled *Common-place and Other Stories*, 1870—long out of print. I am not sure as to when my sister wrote *Hero*; it was before 1866, and I think some years before.

*By the Sea*, p. 343.—This lyric of three stanzas was taken out of one of six stanzas, named *A Yawn*. The longer poem has a much more decided personal note in it.

*Winter Rain*, p. 344.—There is hardly any poem by my sister, other than this, evincing a certain pleasure in the phenomena of winter. She was rather lavish of her coloured illustrations to it, giving no less than four. These are the 'bower of love for birds,' and the 'canopy above nest and egg and mother,' and the 'meadow-grass piece with broad-eyed daisies,' and the lilies on land and water.

*L. E. L.*, p. 344.—This poem was at first entitled *Spring*, and a note was put to the title, '*L. E. L.* by E. B. B.' The note must refer to Mrs. Browning's poem named *L. E. L.'s Last Question*; but it is not entirely clear what relation Christina meant to indicate between that poem and her own *Spring*. Apparently she relied either upon *L. E. L.'s* phrase, which was, 'Do you think of me as I think of you?'—or else upon a phrase occurring in Mrs. Browning's lyric, 'One thirsty for a little love.' It will be clear to most readers that Christina's poem *Spring* relates to herself, and not at all to the poetess L. E. L. (Letitia Elizabeth Landon). I suppose that, when the publishing-stage came, Christina preferred to retire behind

cloud, and so renamed the poem *L. E. L.*, as if it were intended to express emotions proper to that now perhaps unduly forgotten poetess. The poem, as it stands in my sister's MS. note-book, has lines 1 and 3 of each stanza unrhymed, and she has pencilled a note thus: 'Gabriel fitted the double rhymes as printed, with a brotherly request that I would use them'; and elsewhere she adds, 'greatly improving the piece.' In other respects the printed *L. E. L.* is nearly identical with the MS. *Spring*.

*Spring*, p. 345.—In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume to which Christina supplied some coloured designs, this poem (printed on p. 51) is the latest, in order of pagination, to be thus distinguished. Her illustration is rather curious: it applies to the line 'Life nursed in its grave by Death.' We see Death, a white and sufficiently 'bogyfied' personage, holding on her lap a motionless female form, with yellow hair and pink drapery. A markedly leafless tree rises above the group.

*Cousin Kate*, p. 347.—Like *A Triad* (see the note on p. 480), this poem was published by my sister in a volume, but withdrawn in subsequent issues. The like was the case with the ensuing poem, *Sister Maude*, which seems to show a certain reminiscence from Tennyson's composition, *The Sisters*.

*No, thank you, John*, p. 349.—In the copy of my sister's combined *Poems* (1875), in which she made a few jottings, I find this rather amusing entry: 'The original John was obnoxious, because he never gave scope for "No, thank you."' I think I understand who John was; he dated, so far as my sister was affected, at a period some years prior to 1860.

*The Lambs of Grasmere*, p. 350.—In the above-named copy of the *Poems* Christina has written of the lambs, 'Mrs. Ruxton talked about them.' I still remember the occasion well. Mrs. Ruxton (the 'Mary Minto' mentioned in

a published letter of Mrs. Browning) was married to a retired captain in the army, and for a brief while they lived at Grasmere. She was a lady of very dignified character and aspect, whom my sister both liked and respected in no common degree.

*Wife to Husband*, p. 351.—I am not aware that this poem has any individual application. If any, it might perhaps be to my brother's wife, whose constant and severe ill-health permitted no expectation of her living long. Her death took place in February 1862.

*Better So*, p. 351.—This poem consisted at first of six stanzas. The 3rd, 4th, and 6th, were extracted by my sister, and, with some modification of diction and metre, were published in *Time Flies*, and in the *Verses* of 1893. The remaining three stanzas seem to me to be of much the same degree of merit; they are complete enough in themselves, so I publish them here. It seems probable that the whole poem was written upon the death of some cherished friend; I do not remember who it was. The date is not consistent with any death in our own family. The next poem relates of course to the decease of the Prince Consort. It might be possible (not, I think, probable) to suppose that Christina wrote the present lines as an appropriate utterance for 'Our Widowed Queen.' The Prince indeed died on 14 (not 13) December, but on the 13th his death was clearly anticipated.

*In Progress*, p. 352.—The expressions in this sonnet, if used by some one else, might have been not far from apposite to Christina herself. I do not, however, consider that she wrote the verses with any such reference. Clearly the sonnet describes some particular person; I can think of two ladies not wholly unlike this touching portrait—one more especially whom Christina first knew in New-castle-on-Tyne. But any such guess may be quite wrong.

*Seasons*, p. 354.—These lines show

a shrinking from winter-time, apparent in several other compositions. Italian blood may partly account for this; yet, after all, there is plenty of beauty in an ordinary winter, English or other, and the sensations of an invalid (troubled up to early middle age with many symptoms which seemed to point towards consumption) may have had more to do with the feeling.

*A Ring Posy*, p. 354.—Was published in the *Prince's Progress* volume, but omitted by the authoress from later reprints. Possibly she thought the poem to be marked by an unchristian shade of self-complacency.

*A Year's Windfalls*, p. 355.—A note written by my sister says, 'This was written for the Portfolio Society.' I have not any distinct recollection about this Society; possibly Mrs. Bell Scott had something to do with it.

*Twilight Night*, p. 359. Part 2 of this compound poem was the earlier written. Part 1 formed at first a chaunt in *Songs in a Cornfield*: see the note below to that poem.

*What would I Give!* p. 363.—In the sequence of dates there is evidence of a period of spiritual depression and self-reproof. The present poem is followed immediately by *Come unto Me* (which was originally called *Faint yet Pursuing*) (p. 237), and *Who shall Deliver Me* and *In Patience* (p. 238). The last-named is dated 19 March; next comes *Easter*, 9 April. The *Come unto Me*, though in a different metrical form, may almost be regarded as continuous with *What would I Give*.

*The Ghost's Petition*, p. 364.—Used to be called *A Return*, and had four concluding stanzas following the twenty-five which stand in print. Possibly they are better out; but several readers may have felt a certain abruptness in the present termination. In a copy of Christina's *Poems*, 1875, I find that she has altered line 1 of stanza 5 thus—'Sleep, sister,

and wake again.' This alteration, however, does not appear in print in any later edition; and being uncertain as to the date when it was written, I leave it aside. My own preference is for the original line.

*Hoping against Hope*, p. 365.—This was published in *The Argosy*, March 1866, under the title *If*. It was afterwards reprinted with the title which I give, sanctioned (I presume) by my sister. Mr. Frederick A. Sandys made a very able design to it, engraved on wood; able, but (to my thinking) not in character with the poem.

*A Sketch*, p. 368.—These humorous verses (I am perfectly convinced, though their authoress never enlightened me on the subject) relate to a matter which was from the first highly serious to her, and became hardly less than tragic. It is clear to me that the person here bantered was Charles Bagot Cayley, a man eminently unpractical in habit of mind, and abstracted and wool-gathering in demeanour. It is equally clear that, by the date when the verses were written, August 1864, Christina, though the least forward of women, had evinced towards him an amount of graciousness which a man of ordinary alertness would not have overlooked. This *Sketch* might apparently be interpolated, by a reader of *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*, between Nos. 2 and 3 of that series.

*Songs in a Cornfield*, p. 369.—In this pathetic poem the names of the singers were at first Lettice, Marian, May, and Janet. Afterwards Marian was turned into Rachel, and Janet into Marian. The original Marian (now Rachel) sang the second song; but this was a different lyric—the one which now forms No. 1 in *Twilight Night*. Also there were a dozen concluding lines to the whole poem, left out in printing. *Songs in a Cornfield* was set to music by Sir G. A. Macfarren as a cantata, which was performed more than once. To me the



music appeared truly beautiful; but I believe it did not take much with the public, perhaps because of its extremely melancholy tone at the close. I sometimes fancied that, to avoid this objection, a judicious move would have been to place the swallow-song last in the cantata.

*Hear an unked strain*, etc., p. 372.—I suppose this provincial word 'unked' (or unkid) is familiar to several readers: it stands for 'grim, uncanny, dismal.' My sister got hold of it thus. Our uncle Henry Polydore told us (possibly in some such remote year as 1840) that the old country-woman with whom he was lodging used to keep a brief diary; and he had noticed that the entry made in it for one night of unusual storm was, 'Oh what an unkid night!' This may have been in Buckinghamshire, or perhaps in Gloucestershire. The small anecdote amused us all in its way, and the phrase became a sort of catchword among us, and, when the occasion offered, Christina enshrined the word in a poem.

*Amor Mundi*, p. 374.—This justly celebrated poem appeared first in *The Shilling Magazine*, with a fine illustration by Mr. Frederick Sandys. It has also been made the subject of an oil-picture by Mr. Edward Hughes. Mr. Sandys showed a group of two lovers—the man guitar-playing and singing, the woman pleasing herself with a hand-mirror. I do not perceive, however, that such was exactly the authoress's intention. I take it that both her personages are female: one of them a woman, the other the World in feminine shape. The first speaker is the woman, who inquires of the World whither she is going: it is the World who is figured with 'love-locks,' and as 'dear to doat on,' and who is afterwards pronounced 'false and fleetest.' The reader can take or reject this opinion as he likes, for I do not remember ever hearing the point settled by Christina. In her arrangement of her poems when collected, she put *Up-hill*

next after *Amor Mundi*; a significant juxtaposition, done no doubt with intention. That she thought well of the latter may easily be conjectured; none the less I find in one of her editions the following note on the poem: 'Gabriel remarked very truly, a reminiscence of *The Demon Lover*.' This remark would refer more directly to stanza 3.

*From Sunset to Star Rise*, p. 375.—This very impressive sonnet was at first entitled *Friends*. In the note-book containing the MS. of the sonnet I find a pencil note, 'House of Charity,' written against the title. The House of Charity was, I think, an Institution at Highgate for reclaiming 'fallen' women; and it may perhaps be inferred that Christina wrote this sonnet as if it were an utterance of one of these women, not of herself. Yet one hesitates to think so, for the sonnet has a tone which seems deeply personal. 'Christina' (thus wrote Mrs. William Bell Scott in 1860) 'is now an associate, and wore the dress—which is very simple, elegant even; black with hanging sleeves, a muslin cap with lace edging, quite becoming to her with the veil.'

*En Route*, p. 377.—Under this heading I find three pieces in MS. which seem to have little connection one with the other. Presumably they were all written while my sister, along with my mother and myself, was making a flying visit to North Italy (through France and Switzerland). She was never there at any other time. The passionate delight in Italy to which *En Route* bears witness suggests that she was almost an alien—or, like her father, an exile—in the North. She never perhaps wrote anything better. I can remember the intense relief and pleasure with which she saw lovable Italian faces and heard musical Italian speech at Bellinzona after the somewhat hard and nipped quality of the German Swiss. I now give only one piece under the name *En Route*. The first piece and the third were used by my sister in her

poem named *An Immurata Sister* (see p. 380).

*Enrica*, 1865, p. 377.—This poem was first published, under the name of *An English Drawing-room*, in a selection entitled *Picture Posies, Poems chiefly by Living Authors*, 1874, with an illustration by Houghton. I remember perfectly well the lady to whom the verses refer—an interesting person, anything but kindly treated by fate. She was Signora Enrica Barile; her husband had taken the fancy of altering his name to Filopanti, so she was called Signora Filopanti. Her husband (whom I never saw) had some pretensions as an Italian patriot, an adherent of Mazzini and Garibaldi—the latter indeed, in his *Memoirs*, has spoken of him very highly. He also dabbled in the doctrine of metempsychosis, and would have it that Dante and Beatrice were reincarnated in himself and his wife. The general love of humankind which impelled him to rename himself as Filopanti was, unfortunately, unpropitious to a normal affection for his spouse; so after a while he gave her notice that she had better look out for some separate means of subsistence. She came to London—a very agreeable bright-natured lady, still perhaps under thirty, personable and comely, and not far from handsome—of course, as the poem shows, eminently Italian in character and manner. It was through Mrs. Bell Scott that our family knew her. Signora Filopanti was the lady who, upon Garibaldi's visit to London in 1864, delivered a brief and extemporized harangue to him in public, as he stood before a vast concourse *en route* from the railway station to the heart of London. The Signora tried to establish a teaching connection in London, with only indifferent success. After a time she left, and I heard little or nothing further about her until 1902; she was then living, and in Italy. Here, as in the preceding piece, *En Route*, we can discern the strong Italian sympathies and affinities of Christina.

*Husband and Wife*, p. 378.—This was published in a book called *A Masque of Poets*; I do not recollect the details. It appears to be the same poem which (as shown in a letter from my brother, 5 January 1866, published in his *Family Letters*) Mr. F. A. Sandys was thinking of illustrating, and for which my brother proposed the title *Grave-clothes and Baby-clothes*.

*An Immurata Sister*, p. 380.—This poem is constructed out of two compositions which my sister wrote in June 1865, and which she at first associated with the one which is termed *En Route* (see p. 485). The quatrain beginning 'Hearts that die,' and the one beginning 'Sparks fly upward,' were added at some later date; and the one beginning 'The world hath sought' is different from its first form. The title, *An Immurata Sister*, may be open to some uncertainty. The lines are clearly a personal utterance; and I suppose that my sister meant to indicate that, by essential condition of soul, she was not unlike one of those nuns whose rule keeps them severely immured.

*Once for all (Margaret)*, p. 380.—The name Margaret was added when my sister printed this sonnet. The person whom she meant by it was the first Mrs. James Hannay—as I learn from a note pencilled in one of her editions. Presumably the sonnet was written when Mr. Hannay contracted a second marriage.

*Song*, p. 382.—This song (which in MS. bears a title, *What Comes?*) is the last piece entered in Christina's series of note-books, seventeen in number. As I have said before, precise dates are seldom traceable henceforward.

*From Metastasio*, p. 382.—These lines form a paraphrastic translation from a lyric ('Amo te solo') in Metastasio's *Clemenza di Tito*. I found them as a scrap of MS., pencilled by Christina thus: 'I must have done this for Travenzi, who wanted English words to



set to music.' Traventi was a Neapolitan musical composer and teacher; the date of the translation may be 1868 or rather earlier.

*By Way of Remembrance*, p. 384.—To this quartett of sonnets I find the date 1870 appended. To one of them, the third, there is (in a different MS.) the precise date '23. 10. 70.'

*An Echo from Willow-wood*, p. 385.—The title indicates that this sonnet by Christina is based on those sonnets by our brother, named *Willow-wood*, which were first published in 1869. Christina's sonnet may possibly be intended to refer to the love and marriage of my brother and Miss Siddal, and to her early death in 1862; or it may (which I think far more probable) be intended for a wholly different train of events. The verses were printed in *The Magazine of Art*, with an illustration by Mr. C. Ricketts. This was in 1890; but, from the association of the sonnet with *Willow-wood*, I give conjecturally the date 'circa 1870.'

*The German-French Campaign*, p. 386.—The notice prefixed by the author-ess to these two poems is no doubt correct in saying that they were not intended to express 'political bias.' It is none the less true that she had incomparably more general and native sympathy with the French nationality than with the German.

'*The King of Sheshach*,' p. 386.—It is not every one who has the Bible so much at his fingers' ends as my sister had. The king of Sheshach, a potentate obscure to several of us, is discoverable in the book of *Jeremiah*, ch. xxv.

*To-day for me*, p. 387.—Dante Rossetti considered this to be among Christina's noblest productions, and he has probably been not alone in that opinion. This is one more instance of her marked success in carrying one rhyme from end to end of a poem.

*Venus's Looking-glass*, p. 387.—Mr. Cayley sent to my sister a short MS.

poem named *The Birth of Venus*, and soon afterwards, 13 October 1872, another shorter poem on the same argument. Upon the latter poem she wrote the following note: 'The longer of these two poems was sent me first. Then I wrote one which the second rebuts. At last I wound up by my sonnet *Venus's Looking-glass*.' In a copy of her collected *Poems*, 1875, there is also the following note: 'Perhaps "Love-in-Idleness" would be a better title, with an eye to the next one'—i.e. to *Love lies Bleeding*.

*Love lies Bleeding*, p. 388.—As Christina associated this sonnet with the preceding one, *Venus's Looking-glass*, I have kept them together, dating the second 'circa 1872.' All that I really know of its date, however, is that it got published in 1875.

*Days of Vanity*, p. 388.—Appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* for November 1872. Thus I am enabled to fix the date as 'before 1873.' Some other cases of the same sort, not always specified in my notes, occur.

*Cor Mio*, p. 389.—I find this sonnet in my sister's handwriting, endorsed by her 'the original version of my sonnet.' The reference is to No. 18 in the series named *Later Life*. In that version the octave (beginning 'So late in autumn half the world's asleep') is entirely changed, while the sextett remains the same. The present form of this sonnet, being a more directly personal utterance, seems worth preserving.

*A Green Cornfield*, p. 389.—This and some other compositions are dated by me 'before 1876,' on the ground that they were first printed in the collected volume of 1875.

*Valentines to my Mother*, p. 391.—I am probably not alone in considering these as very charming compositions of their simple intimate kind. Christina left a pencilled note about them thus: 'These Valentines had their origin from my dearest mother's remarking that she

had never received one. I, her C. G. R., ever after supplied one on the day; and (so far as I recollect) it was a surprise every time, she having forgotten all about it in the interim.' Our mother was born in April 1800, so she was nearly seventy-six when the first Valentine was written; she died in April 1886.

*Valentine for 1877*, p. 391.—The signature 'C. G. for M. F. R.' means that these verses are spoken as in the person of Maria Francesca (our elder sister) in heaven; she had died in November 1876.

*Valentine for 1878*, p. 392.—This is marked on the back 'To the Queen of Hearts,' and the like with all the ensuing Valentines.

*Valentine for 1883*, p. 393.—Here is an evident reminiscence as to the death of Dante Gabriel in April 1882; probably also as to the death of my infant son Michael in January 1883.

*Freaks of Fashion*, p. 395.—I understand that this was first published in a so-called *Girls' Annual*, 1878. I date it accordingly.

*Parted*, p. 397.—In 1880 a volume of poems by Mr. C. B. Cayley was privately printed. One of its items was entitled *Moor and Christian*, purporting to be 'taken from a Spanish source,' and expressing the emotion of a Moslem woman severed from her Christian lover. Christina, using the same metre and number of lines, wrote the present composition—of course from a very diverse point of view.

*To-day's Burden*, p. 397.—Comes from Mr. Hall Caine's compilation, *Sonnets of Three Centuries*, 1882. Date conjectural, but probably not far wrong.

*The Key-note*, p. 397.—The title is to be understood as meaning that this sonnet was prefixed to the volume *A Pageant and other Poems* (1881), to serve as its key-note.

'*Luscious and Sorrowful*,' p. 398.—

These words, 'Luscious and sorrowful,' are borrowed from a little lyric by Cayley named *Noli me tangere*, which was published in *The Nation*, 1866. In that lyric the epithets are applied to the song of the nightingale. See also the Italian poem (p. 450), headed *Luscious and Sorrowful*.

*Johnny*, p. 399.—Christina got this pretty anecdote from a book in my possession. The copy is imperfect and titleless, but I have reason to think it is named *Recueil d'Actions Héroïques des Républicains Français*, par Léonard Bourdon. It contains coloured prints by Labrousse, and explanatory text. The precise account given of 'Johnny' is as follows: He was named Locquet, aged eight, and was born in Paris; his 'trait de piété filiale' occurred on 15 pluviôse, an 7. His mother being very ill and almost penniless, he ran off to a wig-maker, priced his fine head of hair at twelve francs, received the money, and handed it to his mother, whose illness however proved rapidly mortal. A soldier then adopted young Locquet, in the Decadary Temple of Gratitude. This 'estimable militaire' refused to allow his name to appear in the narrative.

*Hollow-sounding and mysterious*, p. 400.—Some readers will recognize this title as being a phrase applied to the sea in a poem by Mrs. Hemans.

*Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde*, 1674, p. 411.—Perhaps it is superfluous to say that this Sœur Louise was the loving and lovely Duchesse de la Vallière, the mistress of Louis XIV. The year 1674 appears to be that in which she retired into a Carmelite Convent; she did not assume the veil, and become Sœur Louise, until 1675.

*Birchington Churchyard*, p. 412.—The churchyard in which Dante Gabriel Rossetti was buried in the same month when this sonnet was written.

*One Seaside Grave*, p. 413.—It would seem to most people that these lines also

relate to Birchington; my belief, however, is that they relate to Hastings, where Charles Cayley lies buried.

*Who shall say?* p. 414.—The date circa 1884 is presumed, owing to the rough draft of the poem coming on the back of the sonnet, 'Scarce tolerable life,' etc. See the note (p. 469) to that sonnet.

*One Swallow does not make a Summer*, p. 414.—Was printed in *Time Flies*, but not reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893. No doubt my sister considered that it was not admissible into that series of exclusively devotional poetry. The like course was pursued with a few other items of *Time Flies*.

*A Frog's Fate*, p. 414.—Was printed as the preceding item. No title was given to the piece by my sister, so I have supplied one.

*The Way of the World*, p. 415.—Comes from *The Magazine of Art*, July 1894, and must be the latest printed of any verse compositions within my sister's lifetime. Mr. Britten made an illustration to the stanzas. When they were written is quite uncertain to me—possibly at a date even later than that which I have noted.

*Brother Bruin*, p. 416.—I think this may probably have been written in consequence of a letter I sent, enclosing for Christina a 'history of a maltreated bear, from yesterday's *Daily News*.'

*To my Fior-di-lisa*, p. 417.—One of the friends who saw my sister most frequently and affectionately in her closing years was Miss Lisa Wilson. Christina sometimes called her Fior-di-lisa (which is the same as Fleur-de-lys). Miss Wilson, who has a graceful touch of her own both in published verse and in painting, presented to Christina in 1892 a little illuminated book of poems by herself; my sister inserted into it the present lines of response.

*To-morrow*, p. 417.—This little poem

(the title is mine) comes from *The Face of the Deep*; it was not reprinted in the *Verses* of 1893—I hardly see why. It might readily have found a niche in that shrine of sacred song; but, taken singly, it seems more apposite to the section of *General Poems* than to that of *Devotional Poems*.

*Sleeping at Last*, p. 417.—I regard these verses (the title again is mine) as being the very last that Christina ever wrote; probably late in 1893, or it may be early in 1894. They form a very fitting close to her poetic performance, the longing for rest (even as distinguished from actual bliss in heaven) being most marked throughout the whole course of her writings. I found the lines after her death, and had the gratification of presenting them, along with the childish script of her very first verses *To my Mother*, to the MS. Department of the British Museum.

*Poems for Children, and Minor Verse*, p. 417.—The term *Poems for Children* explains itself. By *Minor Verse* I designate some few things written by my sister which, while I consider them to be well worthy of preservation, are nevertheless of a slight and casual kind, and hardly fitted for being mixed up among her *General Poems*. In the *Poems for Children* the principal item is the series named *Sing-song* (a title which was proposed by our mother, and immediately adopted, and no doubt liked owing to its origin, by Christina). This series, as it here stands, was compiled by Christina herself, and brought out in 1872 as a separate volume, charmingly illustrated by that fine artist and most estimable and lovable man, Mr. Arthur Hughes. I do not, of course, interfere here with the arrangement adopted by my sister, and therefore the whole of *Sing-song* has to go among the *Poems for Children*. But I cannot help regarding this with some regret, as the series includes various lyrics which, though not unadapted for children, are truly in a high strain of

poetry, and perfectly suited for figuring among her verse for adults, and even for taking an honoured place as such. It may perhaps be as well to specify which are the items that I more especially regard in this light. They are the items which respectively begin (1) 'Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush'; (2) 'I dug and dug amongst the snow'; (3) 'A baby's cradle with no baby in it'; (4) 'Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth'; (5) 'Growing in the vale'; (6) 'O wind, where have you been'; (7) 'What are heavy? Sea-sand and sorrow'; (8) 'The summer nights are short'; (9) 'Twist me a crown of wind-flowers'; (10) 'Dancing on the hill-tops'; (11) 'If hope grew on a bush'; (12) 'Under the ivy-bush'; (13) 'Sing me a song'; (14) 'The wind has such a rainy sound'; (15) 'Three little children'; (16) 'Rosy maiden Winifred'; (17) 'Roses blushing red and white'; (18) 'When a mounting skylark sings'; (19) 'Who has seen the wind?'; (20) 'O sailor come ashore'; (21) 'The lily has a smooth stalk'; (22) 'Oh fair to see'; (23) 'Is the moon tired? she looks so pale'; (24) 'Good-bye in fear, good-bye in sorrow'; (25) 'Baby lies so fast asleep.' These, however, are not the only compositions which might, without any impropriety (but for the original form of their publication), be transferred to the class of *General Poems*.

*Sonnets written to Bouts-rimés*, p. 417.—Our brother Dante Gabriel and myself were, towards 1848, greatly addicted to writing sonnets together to *bouts-rimés*; most of my verses published in *The Germ*—and this remark applies not to sonnets alone—were thus composed. Christina did not do much in the like way; but, being in my company at Brighton in the summer of 1848, she consented to try her chance. Like her brothers, she was very rapid at the work. The first sonnet in this present series was done in nine minutes; the ninth in five. After the Brighton days she renewed this

exercise hardly at all. A few of her *bouts-rimés* sonnets, after the first scribbling of them, were retouched to some, but only a small, extent.

*Sonnet vii*, p. 419.—This sonnet about a chilly August is certainly not a marked success; but it pictured with some truth the day on which it was written, and I allow it to pass muster.

*Sonnet viii*, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti, writing on 30 August 1848, said, in relation to one of Christina's *bouts-rimés* sonnets (I am not certain which): 'Her other is first-rate. Pray impress upon her that this, and the one beginning 'Me-thinks the ills of life' [*i.e.* No. 8], are as good as anything she has written, and well worthy of revision.'

*The Plague*, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti's letter above mentioned says of this sonnet: 'I grinned tremendously over Christina's *Plague*, which however is forcible, and has something good in it.'

*Sonnets xa, b, and c*, pp. 420, 421.—The sonnet marked *c* was, like 1 to 9, written at Brighton. At a later date—1850, or perhaps earlier—Christina wrote the prose story for girls entitled *Maude* (published in 1897). An incident in this story is the competition of three young ladies composing *bouts-rimés* sonnets; *c* is pronounced to be the best of the three. The sonnet *a* (it will at once be observed) is not a true sonnet at all, having lines of unequal length. This was, of course, intentional on Christina's part, to mark the inaptitude of the young lady who is supposed to have indited *a*. None the less I give the three sonnets together, as showing how readily Christina could utilize the same rhymes for three entirely distinct lines of thought or subject. Two of the phrases in *c* are thus commented in *Maude*: 'I have literally seen a man in Regent Street wearing a sort of hooded cloak with one tassel. Of course every one will understand "the Bason" to mean the one in St. James's Park.'



*To Lalla*, p. 421.—This was a pet name given to Henrietta Polydore, daughter of our Uncle Henry. The name was her own baby invention, I think. She became consumptive, and died in America in 1874, aged about twenty-eight.

*Two Enigmas*, p. 422.—The answer to the first of these enigmas is 'Jack.' It was published in a little pocket-book named *Marshall's Ladies' Daily Remembrancer* for 1850, and must apparently (according to the conditions laid down) have been sent in before June 1849. One copy of the *Remembrancer* was awarded as a prize to the authoress; some other more admired contributors received two copies. The second enigma means 'Punch,' which was another of the subjects for the *Remembrancer* of 1850. This second enigma has reached me only in a manuscript copy made by one of our aunts.

*Two Charades*, p. 422.—The first means 'Candid,' the second 'Proserpine.' The latter was published in the *Remembrancer* aforementioned. There was another unpublished charade, *Egisthus*; but I have not thought it deserving of type.

*Portraits*, p. 423.—This warm-hearted though light effusion is meant for myself in the first stanza, and for Dante Gabriel and myself in the last. There used to be an intermediate stanza, characterizing *him*; it is torn out (by his rather arbitrary hand, beyond a doubt), and I do not remember its terms. Many readers now will agree with me in thinking this a great pity. A laudatory phrase or two regarding myself ought possibly to have induced me to exclude the verses, but I cannot make up my mind to do that.

*Charon*, p. 423.—These sportive lines take their cue, of course, from the old song, 'In my cottage near the wood.' They tickled our sister Maria uncommonly. I had totally forgotten them; Christina on her deathbed (9 October 1894) happened to recite them to me—

for she was often extremely conversible up to and beyond that date, spite of her pain and languor—and I wrote them down from her lips. When first published (1896), the verses were entitled by me *Near the Styx*; but I now gather that Christina's own name for them was *Charon*.

*The P. R. B.* (1), p. 424.—These lines were sent to me in a letter from Christina (then settled with our parents at Frome, Somerset), saying: 'This morning I commenced a remarkable doggerel on the P. R. B.,' etc. And then, after copying out the lines, 'You may guess that at this point of my letter I came to a stand, from the extra finish bestowed on the three last asterisks.' For a few remarks on the substance of the lines, see the following note.

*The P. R. B.* (2), p. 424.—Was first published in my *Memoir* of Dante G. Rossetti, 1895. The sonnet was written soon after the election of Millais as A.R.A. The allusions to Woolner, then in Australia; Holman-Hunt, who was projecting to visit Egypt and Palestine; Dante Rossetti, who had ceased to exhibit his paintings; and Stephens, who had scarcely come forward as an exhibiting artist at all, can be readily understood. The allusion to myself is less perspicuous. It means that I, as art-critic of *The Spectator*, abused in that paper my fellows in the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, and that no one heeded my reviews. This joke was not historically true; I upheld, with such vigour as was in me, the cause of the Præraphaelites, and my articles, being at first solitary in that tone of criticism, passed not wholly unobserved.

*Winter*, p. 425.—Mr. Swynfen Jervis, a friendly acquaintance of our father, wrote a quatrain and a half entitled *Sir Winter*; and he appears to have got Christina to complete the little poem. Christina finished quatrain two, and wrote five others. The third of these five reverts to the idea of 'Sir Winter'; so I omit it, as being extraneous to the

character of her own composition : it has no poetical value.

*Love's Name*, p. 425.—This small ditty is introduced into the prose tale named *Commonplace*, finished in 1870, and published in the same year. It is supposed to be sung by certain young ladies in Greek costume, enacting a charade upon the word 'Love-apple.'

*Golden Holly*, p. 426.—This trifle, owing to its associations of old and uninterrupted friendship, I was unwilling in 1896 to omit : and I know now that I ought not to have omitted it, for Mr. Swinburne pronounced it an excellent thing. It was addressed to Holman [Holly] Frederic Stephens, then a little boy, son of our constant friend, Frederic George Stephens (one of the seven members of the 'P. R. B.'). Tennyson once saw the child in the Isle of Wight, and pronounced him (not unreasonably) to be 'the most beautiful boy I have ever seen.' Mr. Stephens senior, in sending me the verses at my request, wrote that they refer 'to H. F. S.'s frequent pet name of "The Golden Holly," given because of the brightness of his long hair, as well as his birthday being on October 31. He had sent a tea-rose to C. G. R.'

*Sing-song*, p. 426.—The items of this series continue down to the one which begins *Lie a-bed* (p. 443). In the MS. of *Sing-song* Christina made a series of pen-and-ink sketches—slight and primitive of course, but not without suggestiveness. The MS., after lying *perdu* for a long time, has returned to my possession.

*Rhymes Dedicated to the Baby who suggested them*, p. 426.—The baby son of Professor Arthur Cayley of Cambridge, the celebrated mathematician. The lines, 'I know a baby, such a baby,' were, I think, intended for this dedicatee.

*Kookoorookoo—Kikirikee*, p. 426.—I may perhaps be pardoned for saying that these poultry-noises form a reminiscence from Christina's own childhood.

Our father was in the habit of making the noises to amuse his bantlings.

*Willie Wee*, p. 441.—This was my mother's pet name for me in childhood ; a second reminiscence.

*An Alphabet*, p. 443.—This was printed in 1875, with some woodcuts, in some magazine ; the headline of the pages is *For Very Little Folks*, which may or may not be the title of the magazine itself. It must be an American publication, as the verses are headed *An Alphabet from England*.

*Hadrian's Death-Song Translated*, p. 444.—In 1876 Mr. David Johnston, of Bath, formed the project of collecting various translations of the famous lines—'Animula vagula blandula,' etc., and issuing them in a volume, which was privately printed. He looked up old translations, and invited new ones. Christina became one of his contributors, also our sister Maria and myself ; Christina making an Italian as well as an English translation (see p. 453).

*My Mouse*, p. 444.—This was not a 'mouse' in the ordinary sense, but a 'sea-mouse.' Mr. Cayley had picked it up on the seashore, and presented it to my sister, preserved in spirits. The sea-mouse was with her to the end, and may remain with me to the end ; its brilliant iridescent hues are still vivid. The scientific name of this creature is *Aphrodita aculeata* ; hence the allusion to 'Venus.'

*A Poor Old Dog*, p. 444.—My sister was a very staunch supporter of the Anti-Vivisection Movement. In a letter to our brother (dated perhaps in 1879) she sent the present verses, with the following remarks : 'There has just been held a fancy sale at a house in Prince's Gate for the Anti-Vivisection cause, and, having nothing else to contribute, I sent a dozen autographs as follows [then come the verses]. Of these, nine on the first day fetched 2s. 6d. or 3s., while one even brought in 10s. ! The remaining



three, I hope, were disposed of on the closing day.'

*To William Bell Scott*, p. 444.—These verses were sent to Mr. Scott in acknowledgment of a copy of his volume, *A Poet's Harvest-Home*, issued in April 1882. The reference to 'a heavy old heart' has no doubt to do with the death of Dante Rossetti, 9 April 1882. The verses were first published in Mr. Scott's *Autobiographical Notes*.

*Counterblast on Penny Trumpet*, p. 444.—These rather neat lines are entirely out of my sister's ordinary groove, which fact (trifling as they are) makes me the more unwilling to leave them out. They stand signed 'C. G. R. : see *St. James's Gazette*, 21 July 1882 : motive, a Poem.' I infer (for I have not been at the pains of looking up the *St. James's Gazette*) that that newspaper contained some effusion censuring Mr. Bright for having quitted the Ministry after the bombardment of Alexandria, and also censuring Mr. Gladstone for continuing in the Ministry. My sister knew and cared next to nothing about party politics (apart from questions having a religious bearing); in all her later years, however, her feeling leaned more towards the Conservative than the Liberal cause.

*Mole and Earthworm*, p. 445.—Here the title is mine. The lines were published in *Time Flies*, but not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893, where they would have been quite inappropriate.

*To Mary Rossetti*, p. 445.—These slight lines were addressed to my daughter Mary, probably when aged from five to six.

*What will it be?* p. 445.—This snatch of verse, and the five following, come from *The Face of the Deep*; they were omitted from the *Verses* of 1893, presumably as being too slight to figure apart from their context. In each instance, except the third, the title is added by me.

*Versi*, p. 446.—In 1851-52 some young ladies (mostly living in the Regent's Park neighbourhood) had a fancy for getting up a little privately-printed magazine, which was termed *The Bouquet from Marylebone Gardens*. My sister was invited to contribute, and she consented to do so, writing always in Italian. Each contributor adopted some floral name as a signature; Christina was 'Calta.' These *Versi*, and also the following two compositions, come from this rather obscure source. Christina's principal contribution was in prose, not verse—a *Corrispondenza Familiare* between two supposed young ladies, Italian and English, the former being at school. There are eight of these letters, rather neat performances in their way; and, no doubt, others would have followed but for the early decease of the magazine, the withering of the *Bouquet*.

*Nigella*, p. 447.—In the *Corrispondenza* above named these verses are introduced as being written by the Italian damsel to accommodate her English friend, who had been asked to produce some Italian lines for a lady's album.

*Chiesa e Signore*, p. 447.—These lines appear in a scrap of MS. which is thus inscribed: 'Written out at Folkestone 6 August 1871, but date of composition not recollected by C. G. R.' I infer that the date of composition was then rather remote, 'pehaps towards 1860.

*Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*, p. 447.—For any quasi-explanation as to these singularly pathetic verses—'Love's very vesture and elect disguise,' the inborn idiom of a pure and impassioned heart—I refer the reader to the Memoir. The verses were kept by Christina in the jealous seclusion of her writing-desk, and I suppose no human eye had looked upon them until I found them there after her death.

*Si rimanda la Tocca-caldaja*, p. 448.—The phrase here, 'Se pur fumar nol puoi,' sounds odd. The lines were

written in reply to other lines by Cayley named *Si scusa la Toccacaldaja*. His final line contains the phrase, 'S'ei mi fumma,' and hence Christina's words in reply.

*Blumine risponde*, p. 448.—In 'Blumine' the reader will recognize a name used by Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*.

*Lassuso il caro Fiore*, p. 449.—The main topic in this little poem must have some relation to what is touched upon in No. 3 of the series.

*Per Preferenza*, p. 451.—To the first of these stanzas Christina has written the word 'Supposto'; to the second, 'Accertato'; to the third, 'Dedotto.' There must have been in her head some whimsical notion of logical sequence, or what not. I can understand it to some extent, without discussing it.

*L' Uommibatto*, p. 453.—Christina took it upon her to Italianize in this form the name of the *Wombat*, which was a cherished pet animal of our brother. It will be understood that she is exhorting the *Wombat* not to follow (which he was much inclined to do) his inborn propensity for burrowing, and not to turn up in the Antipodes, his native Australia. As a motto to these verses Christina wrote an English distich :—

When wombats do inspire,  
I strike my disused lyre.

*Adriano*, p. 453.—See the note to p. 444.

*Ninna-nanna*, p. 453.—The following

snatches of Italian verse are translations or paraphrases made by Christina from her own volume *Sing-song*. Our cousin Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti first made some translations from that book, whose title he rendered as *Ninna-nanna*; herein I follow his lead. His translations were felicitous. Inspired by his example, Christina made other—and, I conceive, in poetic essentials still better—translations. Readers familiar with *Sing-song* will perceive that numerous compositions in that volume remain untranslated.

*Sognando*, p. 458.—I give this title to two stanzas which I find written by Christina into a copy of our father's book of sacred poems—*Il Tempo, ovvero Dio e l' Uomo*, Salterio, 1843. The copy is one which he gave in the same year to his sister-in-law, Charlotte Polidori; as the latter lived on till January 1890, this copy would only at that date, most likely, have become Christina's property. This consideration and also the look of the handwriting induce me to suppose that the verses were written not earlier than 1890; they would thus be the last Italian verses which my sister produced. She has signed them thus: 'C. G. R., fired by papa's calling this metre difficult'—the metre being the one adopted throughout the whole book *Il Tempo* in its original form. This MS. note might suggest a far earlier date for the lines; but, on the whole, I abide by my own view as just expressed.

## INDEX TO FIRST LINES

- A Baby is a harmless thing, 158  
 A baby's cradle with no baby in it, 427  
 A blue-eyed phantom far before, 330  
 A boat amid the ripples, drifting, rocking,  
     411  
 A boat that sails upon the sea, 415  
 A burdened heart that bleeds and bears,  
     276  
 A chill blank world, yet over the utmost  
     sea, 232  
 A city plum is not a plum, 427  
 A cold wind stirs the blackthorn, 122  
 A cup for hope, she said, 308  
 A dancing bear, grotesque and funny, 416  
 A diamond or a coal? 438  
 A dream that waketh, 388  
 A fool I was to sleep at noon, 379  
 A frisky lamb, 435  
 A garden in a garden, a green spot, 291  
 A glorious vision hovers o'er his soul, 96  
 A handy mole who plied no shovel, 445  
 A heavy heart if ever heart was heavy, 126  
 A holy heavenly chime, 279  
 A holy Innocent gone home, 412  
 A house of cards, 440  
 A hundred, a thousand to one: even so,  
     332  
 A is the alphabet, A at its head, 443  
 A life of hope deferred too often is, 131  
 A linnet in a gilded cage, 428  
 A lovely city in a lovely land, 208  
 A lowly hill which overlooks a flat, 412  
 A merry heart is a continual feast, 142  
 A million buds are born that never blow,  
     410  
 A moon impoverished amid stars curtailed,  
     272  
 A motherless soft lambkin, 433  
 A night was near, a day was near, 280  
 A pin has a head but has no hair, 432  
 A pocket handkerchief to hem, 431  
 A ring upon her finger, 437  
 A robin said, The spring will never come,  
     413  
 A rose, a lily, and the Face of Christ, 226  
 A rose has thorns as well as honey, 441  
 A rose which spied one swallow, 414  
 A smile because the nights are short, 380  
 A song in a cornfield, 369  
 A toadstool comes up in a night, 431  
 A Venus seems my mouse, 444  
 A voice said Follow follow, and I rose, 118  
 A white hen sitting, 436  
 A windy shell singing upon the shore, 305  
 A world of change and loss, a world of  
     death, 393  
 Addio, diletto amico, 447  
 After midnight in the dark, 126  
 Agnellina orfanellina, 456  
 Ah changed and cold, how changed and  
     very cold, 313  
 Ah Lord, Lord, if my heart were right with  
     Thine, 267  
 Ah Lord, we all have pierced Thee, wilt  
     Thou be, 137  
 Ah me that I should be, 219  
 Ah well-a-day, and wherefore am I here?  
     419  
 Ah woe is me for pleasure that is vain, 287  
 Ahi culla vuota ed ahi sepolcro pieno, 455  
 Alas alas for the self-destroyed, 285  
 Alas my Lord, 247  
 All beneath the sun hasteth, 273  
 All heaven is blazing yet, 134  
 All her cornfields rippled in the sunshine,  
     386  
 All tears done away with the bitter unquiet  
     sea, 138  
 All that we see rejoices in the sunshine, 274  
 All the bells were ringing, 439

All the Robin Redbreasts, 393  
 All the world is out in leaf, 339  
 All things are fair if we had eyes to see,  
     194  
 All things that pass, 410  
 All through the livelong night I lay awake,  
     112  
 All weareth, all wasteth, 173  
 Alleluia or Alas my heart is crying, 135  
 Alone Lord God in Whom our trust and  
     peace, 264  
 Am I a stone and not a sheep, 234  
 Amami, t' amo, 453  
 Amico pesce, plover vorrà, 456  
 Amid the shades of a deserted hall, 417  
 An easy lazy length of limb, 423  
 An emerald is as green as grass, 438  
 And is this August weather? Nay, not so,  
     419  
 And who is this lies prostrate at thy feet?  
     94  
 Angeli al capo, al piede, 453  
 Angels at the foot, 426  
 Animuccia, vagantuccia, morbiduccia, 453  
 Annie is fairer than her kith, 301  
 Another year of joy and grief, 393  
 Arise, depart, for this is not your rest,  
     397  
 Arrossisce la rosa—e perchè mai? 457  
 As dying, and behold we live, 213  
 As eager home-bound traveller to the goal,  
     188  
 As flames that consume the mountains, as  
     winds that coerce the sea, 210  
 As froth on the face of the deep, 285  
 As grains of sand, as stars, as drops of  
     dew, 178  
 As many as I love. Ah Lord Who lovest  
     all, 170  
 As one red rose in a garden where all other  
     roses are white, 226  
 As rivers seek the sea, 390  
 As the dove which found no rest, 226  
 As the voice of many waters all saints sing  
     as one, 211  
 As violets so be I recluse and sweet, 276  
 Astonished Heaven looked on when man  
     was made, 120  
 At morn I plucked a rose and gave it Thee,  
     250  
 At sound as of rushing wind and sight as  
     of fire, 170  
 Aura dolcissima, ma donde siete? 455  
 Awake or sleeping, for I know not which,  
     64

Baby cry, 426  
 Baby lies so fast asleep, 442  
 Basta una notte a maturare il fungo, 456  
 Be faithful unto death. Christ proffers  
     thee, 277  
 Beautiful, tender, wasting away for sorrow,  
     398  
 Because one loves you, Helen Grey, 355  
 Because Thy Love hath sought me, 230  
 Because you never yet have loved me, dear  
     403  
 Before the beginning Thou hast foreknown  
     the end, 145  
 Before the mountains were brought forth,  
     before, 73  
 Before the paling of the stars, 217  
 Behold in heaven a floating dazzling cloud,  
     136  
 Behold the Bridegroom cometh—go ye out,  
     156  
 Beloved, let us love one another, says St.  
     John, 159  
 Beloved, yield thy time to God, for He,  
     197  
 Beyond the sea in a green land, 295  
 Beyond this shadow and this turbulent sea,  
     282  
 Blessed Dear and Heart's Delight, 392  
 Blind from my birth, 437  
 Boats sail on the rivers, 439  
 Bone to his bone, grain to his grain of  
     dust, 215  
 Bread and milk for breakfast, 427  
 Bring me to see, Lord, bring me yet to  
     see, 212  
 Brown and furry, 431  
 Brownie, Brownie, let down your milk, 429  
 Bury Hope out of sight, 137  
 Bury thy dead, dear friend, 181  
 By day she woos me, soft, exceeding fair,  
     182  
 By the waters of Babylon, 233  
 By Thy long-drawn anguish to atone, 165  
  
 Can I know it? Nay, 125  
 Can man rejoice who lives in hourly fear?  
     273  
 Can peach renew lost bloom, 136  
 Capo che chinasi, 458  
 Care flieth, 310  
 Casa felice ove più volte omai, 448  
 Cast down but not destroyed, chastened  
     not slain, 209  
 Cavalli marittimi, 457  
 Centre of Earth, a Chinaman he said, 82

- The fai lontan da me, 449  
 The Tì darò, Gesù Signor mio buono? 450  
 Cherry-red her mouth was, 105 :  
 Chiami il mio core, 88  
 Hide not—let me breathe a little, 110  
 Christmas hath a darkness, 158  
 Christ's Heart was wrung for me, if mine  
     is sore, 227  
 Clever little Willie wee, 441  
 Cloth of the lily, Feeder of the sparrow,  
     227  
 Cold the day and cold the drifted snow,  
     48  
 Come back to me, who wait and watch for  
     you, 58  
 Come blessed sleep, most full, most perfect,  
     come, 153  
 Come cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we  
     steer, 88  
 Come, cuckoo, come, 354  
 Come, Thou dost say to Angels, 148  
 Come to me in the silence of the night, 314  
 Come, wander forth with me: the orange  
     flowers, 87  
 Common holly bears a berry, 426  
 Consider, 237  
 Contempt and pangs and haunting fears,  
     218  
 Contemptuous of his home beyond, 414  
 Content to come, content to go, 277  
 Cor mio a cui si volge l' altro mio core, 452  
 Cor mio, cor mio, 453  
 Crieda di rivederti e ancor ti aspetto, 452  
 Crimson as the rubies, crimson as the roses,  
     210  
 Crimson curtains round my mother's bed,  
     442  
 Croak, croak, croak, 357  
 Crocuses and snowdrops wither, 310  
 Crying, my little one, footsore and weary,  
     428  
 Cuccurucù cuccurucù, 454  
 Currants on a bush, 436  
 Dancing on the hill-tops, 434  
 Darkness and light are both alike to Thee,  
     227  
 Darling little Cousin, 421  
 Day and night the accuser makes no pause,  
     229  
 Day that hath no tinge of night, 126  
 Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush,  
     427  
 Dear angels and dear disembodied saints,  
     214  
 Dear Grandpapa,—To be obedient, 85  
 Dear Lord, let me recount to Thee, 254  
 Did any bird come flying? 369  
 Ding a ding, 437  
 Do you hear the low winds singing, 307  
 Does that lamp still burn in my Father's  
     house, 251  
 Does the road wind up-hill all the way?  
     339  
 Dolce cor mio perduto e non perduto, 448  
 Downstairs I laugh, I sport and jest with  
     all, 344  
 D' un sonno profondissimo, 457  
 E babbo e mamma ha il nostro figliolino,  
     454  
 Earth cannot bar flame from ascending,  
     159  
 Earth grown old yet still so green, 157  
 Earth has clear call of daily bells, 193  
 Eight o'clock, 426  
 Every valley drinks, 344  
 Everything that is born must die, 141  
 Experience bows a sweet contented face, 272  
 Eye hath not seen, yet man hath known  
     and weighed, 129  
 Fade, tender lily, 297  
 Faint and worn and aged, 154  
 Fair the sun riseth, 150  
 Fairer than younger beauties, more beloved,  
     391  
 Faith and Hope are wings to Love, 446  
 Fast asleep, mine old familiar friend, 351  
 Fear, Faith, and Hope, have sent their  
     hearts above, 277  
 Felice la tua madre, 451  
 Ferry me across the water, 438  
 Figlia, la Madre disse, 446  
 First, last, and dearest, 382  
 Flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, 84  
 Flowers preach to us if we will hear, 156  
 Fly away, fly away over the sea, 436  
 Forget me not, forget me not, 83  
 Foss' io regina, 455  
 Foul is she and ill-favoured, set askew, 284  
 Friends, I commend to you the narrow  
     way, 226  
 From depth to height, from height to loftier  
     height, 412  
 Frost-locked all the winter, 345  
 Gazing through her chamber window, 332  
 Give me the lowest place, not that I dare,  
     237



Go from me, summer friends, and tarry  
not, 375

God strengthen me to bear myself, 238

Golden haired, lily white, 209 ; 216

Golden-winged, silver-winged, 242

Gone were but the Winter, 103

Good Lord, to-day, 163

Good-bye in fear, good-bye in sorrow, 441

Gran freddo è infuori, e dentro è freddo  
un poco, 454

Grant us, O Lord, that patience and that  
faith, 278

Grant us such grace that we may work Thy  
will, 276

Great or small below, 127

Green sprout the grasses, 316

Growing in the vale, 428

Had Fortune parted us, 397

Hail, garden of confident hope, 135

Hark, the Alleluias of the great salvation,  
179

Hark to the song of greeting ! The tall  
trees, 86

Have dead men long to wait ? 215

Have I not striven, my God, and watched  
and prayed ? 228

Have mercy, Thou my God—mercy, my  
God, 234

He bore an agony whereof the name, 177

He died for me : what can I offer Him ? 188

He resteth—weep not, 98

Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last  
night, 315

Hear what the mournful linnets say, 427

Heart warm as summer, fresh as spring,  
109

Heartsease I found where Love-lies-bleed-  
ing, 134

Heartsease in my garden bed, 430

Heaven is not far though far the sky, 193

Heaven overarches earth and sea, 286

Heaven's chimes are slow, but sure to strike  
at last, 200

Her face was like an opening rose, 316

Her heart that loved me once is rottenness,  
298

Here, where I dwell, I waste to skin and  
bone, 239

Herself a rose who bore the Rose, 174

Hidden from the darkness of our mortal  
sight, 208

Home by different ways, yet all, 129

Hope is like a harebell trembling from its  
birth, 428

Hope is the counterpoise of fear, 271

Hope newborn one pleasant morn, 377

Hop-'o-my-Thumb and little Jack Horner,  
423

Hopping frog, hop here and be seen, 433

How can one man, how can all men, 213

How comes it, Flora, that whenever we,  
353

How great is little man, 121

How know I that it looms lovely, that land  
I have never seen, 231

How many authors are my first, 423

How many seconds in a minute ? 431

Hurt no living thing, 439

I a Princess king-descended, deckt with  
jewels, gilded, drest, 35

I All-creation sing my song of praise, 68

I am a king, 434

I am a star dwelling on high, 97

I am pale with sick desire, 184

I bore with these long weary days and  
nights, 215

I cannot tell you how it was, 318

I caught a little ladybird, 439

I did not chide him though I knew, 109

I do not look for love that is a dream, 290

I dreamed and did not seek : to-day I seek,  
397

I dreamt I caught a little owl, 440

I dug and dug amongst the snow, 427

I dwell alone—I dwell alone, alone, 337

I fancy the good fairies dressed in white,  
421

I followed Thee, my God, I followed Thee,  
176

I found Love in a certain place, 381

I gather thyme upon the sunny hills, 108

I had a love in soft south land, 329

I have a friend in ghostland, 333

I have a little husband, 439

I have a Poll parrot, 440

I have but one rose in the world, 437

I have desired and I have been desired,  
411

I have done I know not what—what have  
I done, 261

I have no wit, no words, no tears, 191

I have not sought Thee, I have not found  
Thee, 261

I know a baby, such a baby, 442

I laid beside thy gate am Lazarus, 139

I lift mine eyes and see, 164

I lift mine eyes to see : earth vanisheth, 193

I long for joy, O Lord, I long for gold, 268



- I looked for that which is not nor can be,  
288
- I, Lord, Thy foolish sinner low and small,  
224
- I love and love not : Lord, it breaks my  
heart, 242
- I love one and he loveth me, 108
- I loved my love from green of Spring, 373
- I marked where lovely Venus and her  
court, 387
- I never said I loved you, John, 349
- I nursed it in my bosom while it lived, 334
- I peered within, and saw a world of sin,  
193
- I planted a hand, 434
- I planted a young tree when I was young,  
358
- I plucked pink blossoms from mine apple-  
tree, 335
- I praised the myrtle and the rose, 84
- I rose at the dead of night, 321
- I said good-bye in hope, 389
- I said of laughter : it is vain, 119
- I said : This is a beautiful fresh rose, 380
- I said within myself, I am a fool, 418
- I sat beneath a willow-tree, 406
- I saw a bird alone, 322
- I saw a saint. How canst thou tell that  
he, 163
- I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall  
see no sorrow, 446
- I sit amid green shady valleys oft, 418
- I sought among the living, and I seek, 419
- I stood by weeping, 205
- I tell my secret? No indeed, not I, 336
- I think of the saints I have known, and  
lift up mine eyes, 213
- I thought to deal the death-stroke at a  
blow, 289
- 'I thought your search was over.' 'So I  
thought,' 304
- I toiled on, but thou, 414
- I took my heart in my hand, 366
- I was a cottage-maiden, 347
- I was hungry and Thou feddest me, 225
- I watched a rosebud very long, 116
- I weary of my life, 382
- I will accept Thy will to do and be, 150
- I will not faint but trust in God, 238
- I will tell you when they met, 330
- I wish I were a little bird, 309
- I wish it were over, the terrible pain, 331
- I wish we once were wedded—then I must  
be true, 323
- I wish you were a pleasant wren, 424
- I wonder if the sap is stirring yet, 314
- I would have gone : God bade me stay,  
242
- I would not if I could undo my past, 383
- If a mouse could fly, 435
- If a pig wore a wig, 431
- If all were rain and never sun, 429
- If he would come to-day, to-day, to-day,  
365
- If hope grew on a bush, 434
- If I had words, if I had words, 371
- If I might see another Spring, 333
- If I should say, my heart is in my home,  
220
- If I were a Queen, 430
- If love is not worth loving, then life is not  
worth living, 127
- If Mr. Bright retiring does not please, 444
- If not with hope of life, 121
- If only I might love my God and die ! 244
- If stars dropped out of heaven, 441
- If that's water you wash your hands in, 381
- If the moon came from heaven, 442
- If the sun could tell us half, 442
- If thou be dead, forgive, and thou shalt  
live, 273
- If underneath the water, 343
- If we shall live, we live, 366
- If you'll busk you as a bride, 410
- In a far distant land they dwell, 111
- In my Autumn garden I was fain, 395
- In my cottage near the Styx, 423
- In nuova primavera, 447
- In Springtime when the leaves are young,  
309
- In tema e in pena addio, 457
- In tempest and storm, blackness of darkness  
for ever, 285
- In that world we weary to attain, 197
- In the bleak mid-winter, 246
- In the grave will be no space, 180
- In the meadow—What in the meadow?  
435
- In weariness and painfulness St. Paul, 172
- Inner not outer, without gnash of teeth, 257
- Innocent eyes not ours, 132
- Io più ti amai che non mi amasti tu, 453
- Is any grieved or tired? Yea, by God's  
will, 164
- Is love so prone to change and rot, 323
- Is the moon tired? She looks so pale, 441
- Is this that name as ointment poured forth,  
222
- Is this the end, is there no end but this?  
284

Is this the Face that thrills with awe, 254  
 It is a land with neither night nor day, 317  
 It is enough, enough, one said, 303  
 It is good to be last not first, 163  
 It is not death, O Christ, to die for Thee,  
     266  
 It is not for her even brow, 302  
 It is over, the horrible pain, 186  
 It is over. What is over? 186  
 It is the greatness of Thy love, dear Lord,  
     that we would celebrate, 164  
 'It's a weary life, it is,' she said, 312  
 It's a year almost that I have not seen her,  
     388  
 It's oh in Paradise that I fain would be, 249  
 It seems an easy thing, 140  
 It was not warning that our fathers lacked,  
     141

January cold desolate, 432  
 Jerusalem is built of gold, 206  
 Jerusalem of fire, 207  
 Jess and Jill are pretty girls, 354  
 Jessie, Jessie Cameron, 371  
 Jesus alone: if thus it were to me, 285  
 Jesus, do I love Thee? 217  
 Jesus, Lord God from all eternity, 220  
 Johnny had a golden head, 399  
 Joy is but sorrow, 125

Keep love for youth, and violets for the  
     spring, 383  
 Kookoorookoo kookoorookoo, 426

La rosa china il volto rosseggiato, 457  
 Laughing Life cries at the feast, 128  
 Launch out into the deep, Christ spake  
     of old, 175  
 Leaf from leaf Christ knows, 221  
 Lie a-bed, 443  
 Lie still, my restive heart, lie still, 123  
 Life flows down to death; we cannot bind,  
     380  
 Life is fleeting, joy is fleeting, 95  
 Life is not sweet: one day it will be sweet,  
     358  
 Life that was born to-day, 271  
 Lift up thine eyes to seek the invisible, 209  
 Lift up your hearts. We lift them up.  
     Ah me! 130  
 Light colourless doth colour all things else,  
     143  
 Light is our sorrow for it ends to-morrow,  
     122

Like flowers sequestered from the sun, 16  
 Listen, the last stroke of death's noon has  
     struck, 420  
 Little lamb, who lost thee? 223  
 Live all thy sweet life through, 302  
 Lo newborn Jesus, 279  
 Long ago and long ago, 38  
 Long and dark the nights, dim and short  
     the days, 172  
 Long have I longed, till I am tired, 402  
 Looking back along life's trodden way, 145  
 Lord Babe, if Thou art He, 160  
 Lord, by what inconceivable dim road,  
     208  
 Lord, carry me. Nay, but I grant thee  
     strength, 221  
 Lord, comest Thou to me? 446  
 Lord, dost Thou look on me, and will not  
     I, 229  
 Lord, give me blessed fear, 271  
 Lord, give me grace, 278  
 Lord, give me love that I may love Thee  
     much, 270  
 Lord God of Hosts, most holy and most  
     high, 220  
 Lord, grant me grace to love Thee in my  
     pain, 268  
 Lord, grant us calm if calm can set forth  
     Thee, 141  
 Lord, grant us eyes to see and ears to  
     hear, 266  
 Lord, grant us grace to mount by steps of  
     grace, 228  
 Lord, grant us grace to rest upon Thy  
     word, 278  
 Lord, grant us wills to trust Thee with such  
     aim, 265  
 Lord, hast Thou so loved us, and will not  
     we, 225  
 Lord, I am feeble and of mean account,  
     275  
 Lord, I am here. But, child, I look for  
     thee, 221  
 Lord, I am waiting, weeping, watching for  
     Thee, 253  
 Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief,  
     266  
 Lord, if I love Thee and Thou lovest me,  
     260  
 Lord, if Thy word had been, 'Worship  
     Me not,' 123  
 Lord Jesu, Thou art sweetness to my  
     soul, 224  
 Lord Jesus Christ, grown faint upon the  
     cross, 167

- Lord Jesus Christ, our Wisdom and our Rest, 171
- Lord Jesus, who would think that I am Thine? 219
- Lord, make me one with Thine own faithful ones, 269
- Lord, make me pure, 274
- Lord, make us all love all, that when we meet, 265
- Lord, purge our eyes to see, 231
- Lord, Thou art fulness, I am emptiness, 445
- Lord, to Thine own grant watchful hearts and eyes, 177
- Lord, we are rivers running to Thy sea, 218
- Lord, what have I that I may offer Thee? 220
- Lord, what have I to offer? Sickening fear, 124
- Lord, when my heart was whole I kept it back, 123
- Lord, whomsoever Thou shalt send to me, 124
- Love brought me down, and cannot love make thee, 281
- Love builds a nest on earth, and waits for rest, 446
- Love came down at Christmas, 159
- Love doth so grace and dignify, 270
- Love for ever dwells in heaven, 83
- Love hath a name of Death, 425
- Love is all happiness, love is all beauty, 97
- Love is alone the worthy law of love, 162
- Love is more sweet than flowers, 90
- Love is sweet, and so are flowers, 84
- Love is the key of life and death, 179
- Love loveth Thee, and wisdom loveth Thee, 270
- Love me, I love you, 426
- Love said nay while Hope kept saying, 132
- Love still is love, and doeth all things well, 223
- Love, strong as death, is dead, 292
- Love, that is dead and buried, yesterday, 388
- Love, to be love, must walk Thy way, 274
- Love understands the mystery whereof, 121
- Love whom I have loved too well, 106
- Lovely Spring, 398
- Lugubre e vagabondo in terra e in mare, 455
- Lullaby oh lullaby, 442
- Lungi da me il pensiero, 448
- Lying a-dying, 214; 244
- Maiden May sat in her bower, 401
- Man rising to the doom that shall not err, 255
- Man's harvest is past, his summer is ended, 202
- Man's life is but a working day, 121
- Man's life is death, yet Christ endured to live, 166
- Many a flower hath perfume for its dower, 415
- Many have sung of love a root of bane, 405
- Margaret has a milking-pail, 435
- Marvel of marvels if I myself shall behold, 122
- Me and my gift : kind Lord, behold, 223
- Me you often meet, 422
- Methinks the ills of life I fain would shun, 420
- Minnie and Mattie, 429
- Minnie bakes oaten cakes, 436
- Mix a pancake, 436
- More shower than shine, 392
- Morning and evening, 1
- Mother mine, 392
- Mother shake the cherry-tree, 432
- Motherless baby and babyless mother, 442
- My baby has a father and a mother, 426
- My baby has a mottled fist, 428
- My blessed mother dozing in her chair, 392
- My first is no proof of my second, 422
- My God, my God, have mercy on my sin, 163
- My God, Thyself being Love, Thy Heart is Love, 171
- My God, to live : how didst Thou bear to live, 238
- My God, wilt Thou accept, and will not we, 231
- My happy happy dream is finished with, 288
- My harvest is done, its promise is ended, 201
- My heart is like a singing bird, 335
- My heart is yearning, 231
- My life is long. Not so the Angels say, 185
- My Lord, my Love, in love's unrest, 183
- My Lord, my Love, in pleasant pain, 184

My love whose heart is tender said to me,  
132  
My mother said, The Child is changed,  
296  
My old admiration before I was twenty,  
444  
My sun has set, I dwell, 241  
My vineyard that is mine I have to keep,  
280

Name any gentleman you spy, 422  
Ne' sogni ti veggo, 458  
Nel verno accanto al fuoco, 454  
Nerve us with patience, Lord, to toil or  
rest, 264  
Never on this side of the grave again, 405  
New creatures, the Creator still the same,  
222  
New Year met me somewhat sad, 190  
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna, 457  
No Cherub's heart or hand for us might  
ache, 167  
No hope in life, yet is there hope, 346  
No more! While sun and planets fly, 130  
No thing is great on this side of the grave,  
139  
Nobil rosa ancor non crebbe, 446  
None other Lamb, none other Name, 226  
Not for me marring or making, 408  
Now did you mark a falcon, 348  
Now the pain beginneth and the word is  
spoken, 107  
Now the sunlit hours are o'er, 109

O blessed Paul elect to grace, 172  
O Christ my God, Who seest the unseen,  
144  
O Christ, our All in each, our All in all,  
230  
O Christ our Light Whom even in dark-  
ness we, 269  
O Christ the Life, look on me where I lie,  
136  
O Christ the Vine with living fruit, 243  
O ciliegia in fiorita, 457  
O earth, lie heavily upon her eyes, 293  
O fallen star, a darkened light, 284  
O First-fruits of our grain, 172  
O foolish soul, to make thy count, 144  
O gate of death, of the blessed night, 153  
O happy rose, red rose that bloomest  
lonely, 97  
O happy rosebud blooming, 95  
O Jesu, better than Thy gifts, 232

O Jesu, gone so far apart, 175  
O Lady Moon, your horns point toward  
the East, 442  
O Lord Almighty who hast formed us  
weak, 169  
O Lord, fulfil Thy Will, 140  
O Lord God, hear the silence of each soul,  
267  
O Lord, how canst Thou say Thou lovest  
me? 248  
O Lord, I am ashamed to seek Thy Face,  
265  
O Lord, I cannot plead my love of Thee,  
445  
O Lord on Whom we gaze and dare not  
gaze, 267  
O Lord, seek us, O Lord, find us, 283  
O Lord, when Thou didst call me didst  
Thou know, 218  
O love, love, hold me fast, 326  
O marinaio, che mi apportati tu? 457  
O mine enemy, 229  
O my love and my own own deary, 379  
O rose, thou flower of flowers, thou fragrant  
wonder, 103  
O sailor come ashore, 438  
O Shepherd with the bleeding feet, 223  
O slain for love of me, canst Thou be cold,  
183  
O tempo tardo e amaro! 451  
O unforgotten, 182  
O Uommibatto, 453  
O weary Champion of the Cross, lie still,  
280  
O wind, where have you been, 429  
O wind, why do you never rest, 428  
O ye who are not dead and fit, 131  
O ye who love to-day, 270  
Of all the downfalls in the world, 133  
Of each sad word, which is more sorrow-  
ful, 129  
Oh fair Milly Brandon, a young maid, a  
fair maid, 403  
Oh fair to see, 440  
Oh for the time gone by when thought of  
Christ, 237  
Oh happy happy land! 203  
Oh kiss me once before I go, 378  
Oh knell of a passing time, 199  
Oh listen, listen, for the Earth, 112  
Oh lost garden Paradise, 318  
Oh pleasant eventide! 297  
Oh roses for the flush of youth, 292  
Oh sad thy lot before I came, 327  
Oh tell me once and tell me twice, 409

- Oh the cheerful Budding-time, 354  
 Oh the rose of keenest thorn, 41  
 Oh what comes over the sea, 382  
 Oh what is earth, that we should build,  
     197  
 Oh what is that country, 245  
 Oh whence do you come, my dear friend,  
     to me, 359  
 Oh where are you going with your love-  
     locks flowing, 374  
 Oh why is heaven built so far, 398  
 Oh would that I were very far away, 104  
 Ohibò piccina, 454  
 On the grassy banks, 429  
 On the land and on the sea, 217  
 On the wind of January, 355  
 Once again to wake nor wish to sleep, 130  
 Once I ached for thy dear sake, 165  
 Once I rambled in a wood, 99  
 Once I thought to sit so high, 233  
 Once in a dream, for once I dreamed of  
     you, 352  
 Once in a dream I saw the flowers, 180  
 Once like a broken bow Mark sprang aside,  
     174  
 Once slain for Him Who first was slain for  
     them, 178  
 Once within, within for evermore, 211  
 One and one are two, 431  
 One face looks out from all his canvases,  
     330  
 One passed me like a flash of lightning by,  
     333  
 One sorrow more ? I thought the tale com-  
     plete, 140  
 One step more and the race is ended,  
     161  
 One woe is past: come what come will,  
     138  
 One word—'tis all I ask of thee, 92  
 One young life lost, two happy young lives  
     blighted, 282  
 Otto ore suonano, 454  
 Our feet shall tread upon the stars, 148  
 Our heaven must be within ourselves, 133  
 Our life is long. Not so, wise Angels say,  
     124  
 Our little baby fell asleep, 426  
 Our Master lies asleep and is at rest, 281  
 Our mothers, lovely women pitiful, 214  
 Our wealth has wasted all away, 151  
 Out in the rain a world is growing green,  
     168  
 Out of the church she followed them, 337  
 Own mother dear, 391  
 Pain and weariness, aching eyes and head,  
     263  
 Pardon the faults in me, 351  
 Parting after parting, 200  
 Passing away, saith the world, passing  
     away, 191  
 Passing away the bliss, 417  
 Patience must dwell with Love, for Love  
     and Sorrow, 274  
 Perdona al primo eccesso, 93  
 Pesano rena e pena, 455  
 Piteous my rhyme is, 163  
 Pity the sorrows of a poor old dog, 444  
 Playing at bob-cherry, 436  
 Poor the pleasure, 409  
 Porco la zucca fitta in parrucca ! 456  
 Possibil non sarebbe, 452  
 Promise me no promises, 350  
 Purity born of a maid, 173  
 Purpurea rosa, 447  
 Pussy has a whiskered face, 434  
 Quando il tempo avverrà che partiremo,  
     449  
 Remember, if I claim too much of you, 384  
 Remember me when I am gone away, 294  
 Rest remains when all is done, 200  
 Rest, rest, the troubled breast, 104  
 Roses and lilies grow above the place, 294  
 Roses blushing red and white, 437  
 Roses on a brier, 196  
 Rosy maiden Winifred, 437  
 Rushes in a watery place, 429  
 S' addormentò la nostra figliolina, 454  
 S' io t' incontrassi nell' eterna pace, 448  
 Safe where I cannot lie yet, 214  
 St. Barnabas with John his sister's son,  
     174  
 St. Peter once—' Lord, dost Thou wash  
     my feet ? ' 175  
 Saints are like roses when they flush rarest,  
     179  
 Salta, ranocchio, e mostrati, 456  
 Scarce tolerable life which all life long, 133  
 Scavai la neve—sì che scavai, 455  
 Se t' insegnasse Iddio, 449  
 See, the sun hath risen, 91  
 Seldom 'can't,' 431  
 Service and strength, God's angels and  
     archangels, 177  
 Seven vials hold Thy wrath, but what can  
     hold, 264  
 Shadow, shadow on the wall, 12



Shadows to-day while shadows show God's  
will, 142  
Shall Christ hang on the cross, and we  
not look? 254  
Shall I forget on this side of the grave? 374  
Shall not the Judge of all the earth do  
right, 223  
She came among us from the South, 377  
She came in deep repentance, 89  
She fell asleep among the flowers, 145  
She gave up beauty in her tender youth,  
286  
She holds a lily in her hand, 234  
She listened like a cushat dove, 313  
She sat alway through the long day, 9  
She sat and sang alway, 290  
She sitteth still who used to dance, 387  
She stands as pale as Parian statues stand,  
311  
She turned round to me with her steadfast  
eyes, 113  
She was as sweet as violets in the spring,  
301  
She was most like a rose when it flushes  
rarest, 325  
She was whiter than the ermine, 300  
Short is time and only time is bleak, 201  
Should one of us remember, 398  
Si che il fratello s' ha un falconcello, 455  
Sing me a song, 435  
Sing of a love lost and forgotten, 309  
Slain for man, slain for me, O Lamb of  
God, look down, 224  
Slain in their high places, fallen on rest,  
210  
Sleep, let me sleep, for I am sick of care,  
293  
Sleep, little baby, sleep, 309  
Sleep, unforgotten sorrow, sleep awhile,  
323  
Sleeping at last, the trouble and tumult  
past, 417  
So brief a life, and then an endless life,  
200  
So I grew half delirious and quite sick,  
423  
Soft white lamb in the daisy meadow,  
310  
Solomon most glorious in array, 138  
Some are laughing, some are weeping,  
295  
Some ladies dress in muslin full and white,  
421  
Somewhere or other there must surely be,  
362

Sonnets are full of love, and this my tome,  
lxxiii  
Sooner or later, yet at last, 157  
Sorrow hath a double voice, 142  
Sorrow of saints is sorrow of a day, 141  
Soul rudderless, unbraced, 444  
Sound the deep waters, 154  
Sposa velata, 456  
Spring bursts to-day, 255  
Spunta la margherita, 456  
Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts.  
389  
Strengthening as secret manna, 308  
Strike the bells wantonly, 331  
Stroke a flint, and there is nothing to  
admire, 430  
Such a hubbub in the nests, 395  
Such is love it comforts in extremity, 272  
Summer is gone with all its roses, 290  
Sweet blackbird is silenced with chaffinch  
and thrush, 425  
Sweet life is dead. Not so, 320  
Sweet sweet sound of distant waters fall-  
ing, 117  
Sweet, thou art pale. More pale to see,  
146  
Sweetest Elizabeth, accept I pray, 90  
Sweetness of rest when Thou sheddest rest,  
144  
Swift and sure the swallow, 440  
Tell me, doth it not grieve thee to lie here,  
114  
Tempest and terror below, but Christ the  
Almighty above, 229  
Ten years ago it seemed impossible, 352  
Thank God, thank God, we do believe,  
117  
Thank God who spared me what I feared,  
235  
That Eden of earth's sunrise cannot vie,  
162  
That song of songs which is Solomon's,  
134  
The blindest buzzard that I know, 368  
The buttercup is like a golden cup, 399  
The child said, 'Pretty bird,' 299  
The city mouse lives in a house, 433  
The curtains were half drawn, the floor  
was swept, 292  
The days are clear, 430  
The dear old woman in the lane, 440  
The dog lies in his kennel, 434  
The door was shut: I looked between,  
320



- The earth was green, the sky was blue, 389  
 The end of all things is at hand; we all, 179  
 The fields are white to harvest, look and see, 125  
 The first was like a dream through summer heat, 20  
 The flowers that bloom in sun and shade, 250  
 The goal in sight! Look up and sing, 145  
 The goblets all are broken, 291  
 The great Vine left its glory to reign as Forest king, 166  
 The half moon shows a face of plaintive sweetness, 198  
 The half was not told me, said Sheba's Queen, 134  
 The hills are tipped with sunshine while I walk, 133  
 The hope I dreamed of was a dream, 350  
 The horses of the sea, 438  
 The Husband of the widow care for her, 352  
 The irresponsible silence of the land, 262  
 The jessamine shows like a star, 295  
 The joy of saints like incense turned to fire, 212  
 The King's daughter is all glorious within, 207  
 The least if so I am, 144  
 The lily has a smooth stalk, 439  
 The lily has an air, 435  
 The lowest place. Ah Lord, how steep and high, 128  
 The mystery of Life, the mystery, 393  
 The night is far spent, the day is at hand, 196  
 The P. R. B. is in its decadence, 424  
 The Passion Flower hath sprung up tall, 135  
 The peach tree on the southern wall, 441  
 The peacock has a score of eyes, 434  
 The rose is Love's own flower, and Love's no less, 417  
 The rose that blushes rosy red, 440  
 The rose with such a bonny blush, 440  
 The roses bloom too late for me, 114  
 The roses lingered in her cheeks, 83  
 The sea laments with unappeasable, 195  
 The shadows gather round me while you are in the sun, 307  
 The shepherds had an angel, 187  
 The shout of a king is among them. One day may I be, 210  
 The sinner's own fault? So it was, 128  
 The soonest mended, nothing said, 408  
 The splendour of the kindling day, 407  
 The spring spreads one green lap of flowers, 402  
 The stream moaneth as it floweth, 112  
 The summer nights are short, 430  
 The sunrise wakes the lark to sing, 391  
 The sweetest blossoms die, 116  
 The tempest over and gone, the calm begun, 167  
 The twig sprouteth, 143  
 The two Rossettis (brothers they), 424  
 The upland flocks grew starved and thinned, 350  
 The white dove cooeth in her downy nest, 152  
 The wind has such a rainy sound, 436  
 The wind shall lull us yet, 304  
 The world—what a world, Ah me! 283  
 The year stood at its equinox, 367  
 There are lilies for her sisters, 319  
 There are rivers lapsing down, 321  
 There are sleeping dreams and waking dreams, 55  
 There is a sleep we have not slept, 186  
 There is but one May in the year, 430  
 There is nothing more that they can do, 232  
 There is one that has a head without an eye, 435  
 There is silence that saith, Ah me! 406  
 There she lay so still and pale, 93  
 There's a footstep coming; look out and see, 364  
 There's blood between us, love, my love, 340  
 There's little sunshine in my heart, 366  
 There's no replying, 400  
 There's snow on the fields, 427  
 These days are long before I die, 342  
 These roses are as perfect as of old, 328  
 They are flocking from the East, 256  
 They have brought gold and spices to my King, 148  
 They lie at rest asleep and dead, 204  
 They lie at rest, our blessed dead, 127  
 They made the chamber sweet with flowers and leaves, 308  
 They scarcely waked before they slept, 159  
 They throng from the East and the West, 198

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
202

This near-at-hand land breeds pain by  
measure, 194

Thou sleepest where the lilies fade, 309

Thou who art dreary, 87

Thou who didst hang upon a barren tree,  
244

Thou whom I love, for whom I died, 257

Three little children, 436

Three plum buns, 433

Three sang of love together—one with lips,  
329

Through burden and heat of the day, 142

Through the vales to my love! 390

Thy cross cruciferous doth flower in all,  
167

Thy fainting spouse, yet still Thy spouse,  
230

Thy lilies drink the dew, 275

Thy lovely saints do bring Thee love, 218

Thy name, O Christ, as incense streaming  
forth, 223

Ti do l'addio, 452

Till all sweet gums and juices flow, 26

Time lengthening, in the lengthening  
seemeth long, 199

Time passeth away with its pleasure and  
pain, 199

Time seems not short, 198

To come back from the sweet South to the  
North, 378

To the God who reigns on high, 83

To think that this meaningless thing was  
ever a rose, 410

To-day's your natal day, 82

Together once, but never more, 201

Together with my dead body shall they  
arise, 169

Toll, bell, toll—for hope is flying, 285

Too cold almost for hope of spring, 392

Treasure plies a feather, 140

Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of  
the Lord, 199

Trembling before Thee, we fall down to  
adore Thee, 161

Tumult and turmoil, trouble and toil, 230

Tune me, O Lord, into one harmony, 275

Twist me a crown of wind-flowers, 430

Two days ago with dancing glancing hair,  
336

Two doves upon the self-same branch,  
353

Two gazed into a pool, he gazed and she,  
385

Uccello delle rose e del dolore, 450

Udite, si dolgono mesti fringuelli, 455

Under the ivy bush, 434

Under willows among the graves, 368

Underneath the growing grass, 311

Unmindful of the roses, 413

Unripe harvest there hath none to reap it,  
132

Unspotted lambs to follow the one Lamb,  
160

Up, my drowsing eyes, 178

Up Thy hill of sorrows, 166

Vanity of vanities, the Preacher saith, 119

Venga amicizia e sia la benvenuta, 450

Vento gentil che verso il mezzodì, 452

Voices from above and from beneath, 195

Vola, preghiera, e digli, 447

Volgo la faccia verso l' oriente, 451

Watch with me, men, women, and children  
dear, 190

Watch yet a while, 121

Water calmly flowing, 84

We are of those who tremble at Thy word,  
196

We buried her among the flowers, 300

We know not a voice of that river, 171

We know not when, we know not where,  
196

We meet in joy though we part in sorrow,  
236

We met hand to hand, 359

Wearied of sinning, wearied of repentance,  
252

Weary and weak—accept my weariness,  
251

Wee wee husband, 439

Weep yet awhile, 152

Weigh all my faults and follies righteously,  
268

What are heavy? Sea-sand and sorrow,  
430

What are these lovely ones, yea what are  
these? 212

What art thou thinking of, said the mother,  
88

What can lambkins do, 362

What do the stars do? 442

What does the bee do? 440

What does the donkey bray about? 433

What is it Jesus saith unto the soul? 127

What is life that we should love it, 95

What is pink? A rose is pink, 432

What is the beginning? Love. What the  
course? Love still, 274  
What is this above thy head, 283  
What shall we do with Margery? 360  
What will it be, O my soul, what will it  
be, 445  
What will you give me for my pound? 432  
What would I give for a heart of flesh to  
warm me through, 363  
When a mounting skylark sings, 438  
When all the over-work of life, 192; 194  
When Christ went up to heaven the  
Apostles stayed, 170  
When fishes set umbrellas up, 434  
When I am dead, my dearest, 290  
When I am sick and tired it is God's will,  
156  
When I was dead my spirit turned, 339  
When if ever life is sweet, 150  
When my love came home to me, 322  
When sick of life and all the world, 197  
When the cows come home the milk is  
coming, 437  
When the eye hardly sees, 313  
When wickedness is broken as a tree, 206  
When will the day bring its pleasure? 252  
Where are the songs I used to know? 397  
Where innocent bright-eyed daisies are,  
433  
Where love is, there comes sorrow, 137  
Where my heart is, wherever that may be,  
359  
Where never tempest heaveth, 122  
Where shall I find a white rose blowing?  
131  
Where sunless rivers weep, 292  
Where were you last night? I watched at  
the gate, 361  
Wherefore art thou strange and not my  
mother? 377  
Whereto shall we liken this blessed Mary  
Virgin, 173  
While Christ lay dead the widowed world,  
168  
While I sit at the door, 373  
While roses are so red, 363  
While we slumber and sleep, 409  
Whiteness most white. Ah to be clean  
again, 275  
Who art thou that comest with a steadfast  
face, 103  
Who calleth?—Thy Father calleth, 248  
Who cares for earthly bread though white,  
128  
Who extols a wilderness? 90

Who has seen the wind? 438  
Who is this that cometh up not alone, 207  
Who knows? God knows, and what He  
knows, 138  
Who scatters tares shall reap no wheat,  
169  
Who shall tell the lady's grief, 89  
Who sits with the King in His throne? 207  
Who standeth at the gate? A woman old,  
147  
Who told my mother of my shame? 348  
Who would wish back the saints upon our  
rough, 129  
Whoso hath anguish is not dead in sin, 271  
Whoso hears a chiming for Christmas at  
the nighest, 278  
Why did baby die, 428  
Why does the sea moan evermore? 343  
Why has Spring one syllable less, 408  
Why should I call Thee Lord who art my  
God? 246  
Why were you born when the snow was  
falling? 379  
Winter is cold-hearted, 363  
Winter's latest snowflake is the snowdrop  
flower, 393  
Wintry boughs against a wintry sky, 415  
Wisest of sparrows that sparrow which  
sitteth alone, 143  
Woe for the young who say that life is  
long, 287  
Woman was made for man's delight, 416  
Words cannot utter, 168  
Would that I were a turnip white, 420  
Wouldst thou give me a heavy jewelled  
crown, 418  
Wreathe no more lilies in my hair, 304  
Wrens and Robins in the hedge, 428  
Yea blessed and holy is he that hath part  
in the First Resurrection, 211  
Yea if Thou wilt Thou canst put up Thy  
sword, 144  
Yes I too could face death and never  
shrink, 297  
Yet earth was very good in days of old,  
161  
You must not call me Maggie, you must  
not call me Dear, 375  
You tell me that the world is fair, in spite,  
302  
You were born in the Spring, 445  
Young girls wear flowers, 135  
Young Love lies sleeping, 312  
Your brother has a falcon, 427

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